LETTERS

MILITARY

AND

POLITICAL,

From the ITALIAN of

Count *ALGAROTTI*, K

KNIGHT OF THE ORDER OF MERIT,

AND

CHAMBERLAIN TO THE KING OF PRUSSIA.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY,

CAPTAIN GENERAL AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES IN SOUTH BRITAIN,

GENERAL IN THE ARMY,

COLONEL OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF HORSE-GUARDS,

GOVERNOR OF JERSEY,

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR ST. EDMOND'S BURY,

AND ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL,

This Work is inſcribed,

By his moſt obedient

and moſt reſpectful

humble ſervant,

The Tranſlator.

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ERRATA.

Page — 2, l. 19. *for* took *read* takes.
4, l. 9. *for* eruptions *read* irruptions.
42, l. 11. *dele* he.
60, l. 21. *for* Robinſon *read* Robins.
160, l. 6. *for* ſeperate *read* ſeparate.
161, l. 1. *for* fort *read* foot.
171, l. 21. *between* Demetrius, Poliorcetes, *dele* the comma.
228, l. 4. *for* Kiuperli *read* Kuperli.

LETTERS

MILITARY AND POLITICAL.

LETTER I.

On the Military Exercises of the Prussians in Time of Peace.

To Count PERRON,

Heretofore Minister of his Sardinian Majesty at the Court of Dresden, and afterwards at that of London.

FOR some time back the Spree has begun to raise her head, and to look with confidence upon the Seine, the Thames, and the Danube. To secure the increasing prosperity of his dominions, the king has with much wisdom determined to put them under the protection of an army disciplined to the highest degree of perfection. To this effect he exhibits, during five or six

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months of the year, the moſt exact repreſentation of war that can be imagined; which he thinks the more neceſſary, as military ſtates, like ſteel, contract ruſt, when ſuffered to remain inactive.

The other day, for inſtance, we left Potzdam betimes in the morning, to ſee in the neighbourhood one of the moſt beautiful ſights in the world; a leſſon on the great art of princes, reduced to the ſtricteſt geometrical method. The garriſon of Potzdam, compoſed of ſix battalions, among which was the king's own regiment, which may be called the tenth legion, the flower of the human ſpecies, to the number of nine or ten thouſand men, was encamped upon a gentle eminence, at the foot of which the river Hawle took its courſe: over this river they had a bridge to croſs on the right of the camp, by which their ſcouts paſſed, to gain intelligence of the enemy, who occupied the other ſide of the river. This little army, on receiving information that the enemy, equal in infantry, and with a conſiderable body of horſe, was advancing upon them, found it neceſſary

oeſſary to take meaſures for a retreat. This retreat was to be made firſt along the courſe of the river on an ample plain, where there was room for the cavalry to act, and afterwards through a wood, where an ambuſh was to be apprehended. The ſignal for ſtriking tents being given, the head of the bridge on the other ſide is abandoned, and the bridge deſtroyed. The army then begins to deſcend the hill in ſeveral columns, while ſome ſmall bodies of grenadiers, poſted in houſes on this ſide the river, are left to annoy the enemy while repairing the bridge. The army, being unprovided with cavalry, is formed into a ſquare, with the baggage in the center, in the ſame manner as the Ruſſians marched through the deſerts of Ucrania and Crimea, and as Xenophon frequently practiſed in his celebrated retreat. The army then marches in a hollow ſquare, the grenadiers being ſent on before to take poſſeſſion of the riſing grounds, and to poſt themſelves in the wood, which the army is to paſs through.

Mean while the bridge being repaired, the enemy paſs the river; and their cavalry, ſcattering themſelves throughout the plain, make attempts to penetrate in different parts of the ſquare; which repels their attacks, and continues the march in good order. More impediments ariſe from the badneſs of the ground, than from the deſultory eruptions of the enemy. The wood they find encompaſſed on one ſide by a marſh, as it is on the other by the river: ſome carriages ſink into the ſwamp, and cauſe a trifling delay, which is ſoon obviated. At the entrance of the wood, the ſquare is reduced, part of the infantry filing off in front, followed by the baggage, and the greateſt part of the army in the rear, to make head againſt the enemy. The precaution of detaching a body of grenadiers, to take poſt in the wood, did not turn out a fruitleſs one: for the enemy had at break of day ſent before a conſiderable detachment of cavalry on the other ſide of the river, who had croſſed it, and poſted themſelves in the thickeſt part of the wood, in order to fall upon the army in front and flank, ſuppoſing that

our

our attention would have been entirely employed in the rear. But a ſtroke that is foreſeen comes with little force; their attempt was therefore rendered abortive: ſo that after a little ſkirmiſhing, and a few movements to ſupport thoſe obliged to give way, the army paſſed the wood, happily without loſs.

Was not ſuch a ſpectacle, exhibited by the firſt actors in the world, by ſo many Roſcius's in their profeſſion, worthy the preſence of a God? In fact, Lowendahl was preſent, who came to Potzdam, as it were, to do homage at the throne of Mars.

At a ſimilar ſpectacle Count Saxe not long ſince attended. The king wanted to give him a ſpecimen of the excellence of his cavalry, of which he may in ſome reſpect call himſelf the founder. He manœuvred the ſquadron of guards before the Count, which, at one time drawn up cloſe, exhibited the appearance of a rock, at another that of a cloud, ſcattered along the plain. When charging in cloſe order, you would think you heard the

Qua-

Quadrupetante putrem ſonitu quatit ungula campum,

of Virgil; the χθων σμερδαλεον κονακιζε of Homer: but the beauty of it was, that in the charge on full gallop, one horſe's head was not a foot beyond another; the line was ſo exactly ſtraight, that Euclid himſelf could not have found fault with it.

The king once aſked Marſhal Keith, who had been in the ſervice of Spain before he went into that of Ruſſia, how he would conduct himſelf at the head of a wing of Spaniſh, againſt ſuch another of Pruſſian cavalry. After ſtanding ſome time in ſuſpence, Keith anſwered, that it would be impoſſible to wait the ſhock of the Pruſſian horſe: for before they would be upon you, yours would have already given way, terrified at that whirlwind which they bring along with them, and which increaſes more and more as they approach. To meet them half-way would be no leſs imprudent, with a cavalry brave indeed, but light; active, but not firm. The only wiſe meaſure would be, to open to right and left, give them a free paſſage, and afterwards to wheel about,

about, and attack them on flank and in rear, to ſurround them, and wait the event. His anſwer was extremely flattering to the king; one could ſee that he wiſhed there was upon the ſpot a ſquadron of Spaniſh carabineers to make the experiment.

But there is no neceſſity, as I before obſerved, for the preſence of a Saxe or a Lowendahl, that we might be entertained by military ſpectacles. Theſe fine ſights are every day exhibited, whether ſuch great men come to ſee them or not; by which the Pruſſians acquire an expertneſs in that dreadful game, in which the ſtake is often a province or an empire; in paſſing rivers, attacking villages, defending eminences, chuſing ſuch poſitions as may enable a ſmall body to defend itſelf againſt a greater, retiring in order; in ſhort, in every manœuvre and operation of war.

Amongſt many other military experiments, that appeared to me a very fine one, which was performed ſome months ago by eighteen battalions, who were to deploy from the paſs of a mountain into a plain,

a plain, occupied in a great meaſure by a conſiderable body of cavalry, in two lines; a perfect image of Krotſka. This was done by a movement, called Diſplaying the Fan; and I aſſure you, an Engliſh lady, however inſtructed by the Spectator, could not do it quicker than theſe battalions did. It is almoſt incredible in how ſhort a time they were formed, ſo as to receive the charge of the cavalry. It is my opinion, that any other ſoldiery would have been at leaſt ten times as long in performing this movement, or would perhaps have been broke and put in confuſion in the middle of it, as happened at the fatal battle of Krotſka.

Would you wiſh to ſee the method of conducting ſieges? They are here carried on, ſince the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, as they were before it in Flanders; and they ſeem to be directed by a Bertola or a Vauban. *Si principes Græciæ eſſe vultis, caſtris utendum, non palæſtrâ.* Thus ſpoke, and thus acted, Epaminondas. This was the practice of his great diſciple, Philip, who, notwithſtanding the thunder darted againſt him by the eloquence of Demoſthenes, the moſt formidable enemy he

he ever had, in a few years made himself master of Greece; and, as captain-general of it, was to pass over to the conquest of Persia. Death however cut short his design; but it was in the issue accomplished by his son Alexander, who filled the world with the glory of his name.

You, my Lord, who aspire even to a higher dominion than that of Greece, that is, to the dominion of your own passions, have thought proper, though in the flower of youth, to renounce all public business, and, throwing yourself into the arms of Philosophy, chuse rather to live with your friends, with your books, and with yourself, under the beautiful arbours of your magnificent and delightful villa of Valdosta.

LETTER II.

Whether the Line of Battle be beſt with, or without Intervals?

To Count AURELIO BERNIERI.

THE art of war may certainly be held in a great meaſure a demonſtrative ſcience, and as ſuch was taught among the ancients, and particularly among the Greeks. But it is alſo certain that many queſtions, and thoſe of the moſt important, in this ſcience, remain undecided. This however is not ſo much to be wondered at in the preſent age, while the various methods of conducting a war are founded rather on circumſtances and events, than on any fixed principles; and while generals, neglecting the theory, truſt entirely to the knowledge they may acquire by practice.

The queſtion which your Lordſhip propoſes to me, is doubtleſs one of the moſt important, Whether the ſquadrons and battalions of the firſt line ſhould have intervals,

intervals, or not? To refer this queſtion to experience, would be doing nothing; for there are authorities as favourable to one opinion as the other. Thoſe who ſupport the intervals, may inſtance the many victories which the French have gained with that order of battle: but the practice of the Pruſſians is oppoſite; and many perſons may reaſonably imagine, that they have acquired at Molwitz, at Czaſlau, at Striga, at Sorr, and at Keſſeldorff, the right to decide upon this queſtion. To this authority however another may be oppoſed, and the Pruſſians need not bluſh at the parallel, that of the Romans, who with intervals in their line conquered the world. Whom now can we appoint as arbitrator between the Capitol and Potzdam? Your Lordſhip wiſhes that I ſhould aſſume that office; and think, becauſe I live ſo much among ſoldiers, that I am become a ſoldier myſelf, another Elian at the court of a ſecond Trajan.

All that I can do is to ſubmit to your Lordſhip's better judgment a few obſervations upon the ſubject. Marſhal Puy-

ſegur, who of late years has endeavoured to reſtore the art of war to its ancient ſplendour, has ſhewn how the order of battle, with a full and uninterrupted line, is to be preferred to the line with intervals. The firſt reaſon he gives is that general one, that the greater number will have the advantage of the ſmaller. But, not content with what may be called a vague demonſtration, he deſcends more into particulars, and gives one that is ſtricter and more concluſive. Two lines he ſuppoſes to engage, of an equal extent, one with intervals, the other without. As ſoon as they come to cloſe action, thoſe corps of the full line, which find themſelves oppoſite to the intervals of the other, will pierce through thoſe very intervals, and, wheeling to right and left, will attack thoſe bodies in flank and rear, which are already engaged in front: ſo that the full line, by its very diſpoſition, has the advantage over that with intervals.

But how comes it that the Romans conquered with a different order; they, who had ſo often to cope with brave and diſ-

diſciplined armies, which drew up in full line againſt them? Why did they prefer the order of battle with intervals to every other; they, who gave themſelves up ſo much to the ſtudy of military affairs, and had more experience in that ſcience than any other people of the known world? As you ſeem to be ſo inclined, let us endeavour to trace the cauſe of it.

Armies are in our days uſually drawn up in two lines; each line being four, or, what is more common, three deep: the diſtance between the lines is generally 150 toiſes, or 900 feet. Your Lordſhip knows, that there are ſeveral reaſons for placing the lines at ſuch a diſtance from each other; firſt, that they may not be ſo eaſily flanked and ſurrounded by the enemy, who to do this would be obliged to make a conſiderable circuit, which would diſcover his deſign; to have room enough to march a battalion or more in front between the lines, in caſe it ſhould be neceſſary to ſend them to the ſupport of either wing of the army; and that in the action the ſecond line ſhould be beyond the reach of the enemy's fire. The

Romans

Romans drew up their armies in three lines, each being twelve, nine, or ſix deep at the leaſt; and between the firſt and third line there was a diſtance of ſomewhat more than 400 feet. That this was nearly the diſtance, may be drawn from two circumſtances; that their miſſile weapons carried about 500 feet, as we are informed by Vegetius; and that the Triarii, who compoſed the third line, were no otherwiſe protected from the diſcharge of them, but by placing one knee on the ground, and covering themſelves with their bucklers.

Neither had they the ſame reaſons as we have to leave ſuch a ſpace between their lines. Their defenſive armour enabled them to make light of the darts and arrows of the enemy; and their maniples not being ſo numerous as our battalions, and occupying a very ſmall front on account of their having ſo many in file, it was not requiſite to leave ſo large an interval, to march two or three of them in front between each line of the army. Beſides, the Romans, being accuſtomed to give battle at a ſmall diſtance from their camp,

were

were not apprehenſive of being flanked by the enemy; who, had he attempted it, would have been in danger of being taken in flank himſelf by the body that was left to defend the camp. Moreover, they ſometimes took the precaution of digging a trench from their camp to each flank of the army.

Now let us oppoſe to a Roman legion a body of Germans, for inſtance, drawn up without intervals; and let us ſuppoſe, according to the poſition of Marſhal Puyſegur, that the enemy will form the deſign of penetrating through the intervals of the Roman line, to attack the different cohorts or maniples on the flank and in the rear. By the way, they will not find it ſo eaſy, on account of their ſuperior depth to that of our battalions. But let us ſuppoſe that they gain their point; they will ſtill have a very difficult game to play, in oppoſing the maniples of the ſecond line, which are poſted oppoſite to the intervals of the firſt: for the diſtance between the lines not being ſo much as 200 feet, and the Roman ſoldiers being exerciſed in the courſe, the maniples

maniples of the ſecond line will ſoon charge the enemy, and ſurround him. He conſequently falls into his own ſnare.

This, if I miſtake not, will account for the order of the Romans, with intervals in their line, not being liable to the ſame objections with ours. Beſides, they had quickly the means of altering it: the ſecond line being poſted at ſo ſmall a diſtance from the firſt, they could in a few moments bring up the maniples of the one into the intervals left in the other, and ſo form an entire line, either wholly or in part, as circumſtances required it. It is even probable that the full line prevailed at length among the Romans; and that Julius Cæſar with this very order made the conqueſt of Gaul, and performed thoſe great actions which will ever be objects of admiration and ſtudy to military men; for in his commentaries there is no mention of the Haſtati, the Principes, or the Triarii, nor the ſmalleſt ſhadow of that chequered order which was certainly uſed in the time of Scipio.

This,

This, my Lord, is all I have to obſerve upon the queſtion you have propoſed to me; and I ſhall be extremely happy, if it ſhould in any degree give your Lordſhip ſatisfaction.

LETTER III.

On the Column of the Chevalier Folard.

To the Same.

YOUR Lordſhip was pleaſed to make me at one time two very handſome preſents; your own ſpeech on the opening of the new Academy, and the military memoirs of the Greeks and Romans, which Mr. Guiſchard has lately given to the public. It is impoſſible for me to expreſs the pleaſure I received on reading your oration, which, for purity of ſtyle and richneſs of matter, is worthy of that tutelary genius of the fine arts, who has made it his endeavour to reſtore Parma to her former eminence in literature.

Nor was your Lordſhip miſtaken in ſuppoſing that the preſent of Mr. Guiſchard's book would be highly acceptable. It is very ſeldom we find in a military man ſo much knowledge and erudition as in this author. We may ſay with truth, that he has penetrated into the ancient art of war, armed with critical judgment and knowledge of the Greek; arms with which Folard was but indifferently provided. It could not but give me a moſt ſenſible pleaſure to find my opinion confirmed by his authority, that Scipio's army was not drawn up in column at the battle of Zama: and I have further cauſe of exultation, to reflect that it is corroborated by the judgment of Keith, to whom I ſome years ſince communicated my ideas on this ſubject, and whom I hoped to ſee once more crowned with freſh laurels. *Dis aliter viſum.* The battle of Hoffkirken ſnatched him from us; and he is now perhaps diſcourſing of his entry into Bohemia, the battles of Roſbach and of Liſſa, with Turenne and Marlborough. He had ſtudied his profeſſion with the judgment and penetration of an Engliſhman; and his concurrence

rence gave me confidence to take the field againſt Folard, and to engage his column of Zama. But from whom can I now derive ſufficient courage to attack the whole ſyſtem of the column, conſidered by itſelf, unleſs from a Maurice or a Frederick?

The Count de Saxe, a ſhort time before his death, came to pay a viſit to the King of Pruſſia: it put us in mind of the meeting of Scipio and Hannibal. The Count remained ſome days at Potzdam, which might be called the *School of Mars*: and there he ſaw for the firſt time that cavalry which he had heard ſpoken of ſo often. Obſerving the regularity and ſpirit, the agility and ſteadineſs, of its manœuvres, he could not reſtrain himſelf from paying ſeveral compliments to its inſtitutor, which could not have been very unpleaſing to him. They met at leaſt twice a day, at dinner and ſupper, in the palace of *Sans-Souci*. The King ſometimes uſed to ſend for his gueſt in certain open carriages, moſt beautifully ornamented; which made ſomebody preſent obſerve, that the King judged right

in putting the Marſhal and his train into triumphal chariots; to which the Count de Frize, who was of the number, anſwered: We are greatly obliged to his Majeſty, but happily are in a place where theſe chariots are in plenty.

I have often heard them diſcourſe on military topics at thoſe entertainments, where I might be ſaid *epulis accumbere divûm*, and ſeemed to be attending at Petrarch's *Triumph of Fame*. The moſt eminent commanders paſſed in review before them; and I may ſay with truth, that their merits were very nicely ſcrutinized. They ſometimes diſcuſſed the different orders of battle; among which they did not forget the column. They agreed, as far as I can remember, that ſuch an order was rather calculated for defence, than for acting offenſively; that the only occaſion on which it can attack, with any proſpect of ſucceſs, is when the enemy is entrenched, as experience has frequently demonſtrated: and no wonder; for the ſtrength of the column conſiſting in its bulk and ſolidity, in its weight and ſhock, it breaks through what-

whatever ſtands in its way; and the enemy, who waits its attack in the trenches, gives it an opportunity of acting with all its advantages: having forced its way into one part or more of the enemy's lines, it divides them into two or more bodies, and prevents them from joining or ſupporting each other: or, when engaged in the open field, which will oftener happen, the column, on account of its ſmall extent in front, may be ſurrounded by the light-armed troops, and incloſed like the wedge of the ancients, falling into the *forceps*. Though ſurrounded, it can indeed make head on all ſides, and defend itſelf admirably: but yet it loſes the advantage of attacking, which ſhould always be the object of a commander, when his force will admit of it. When on the defenſive, troops ſhould occupy as little ground as poſſible; but the reverſe when they are to act offenſively. All the good that reſulted to the Engliſh from their column of 12,000 men at Fontenoy, was a ſafe and orderly retreat. But this very column, which has been the ſubject of ſo much diſcuſſion among military men, was

the

the effect of chance, and not of any partiality that the Engliſh General had for the *Folardian* ſyſtem. The Engliſh had to paſs through the villages of Fontenoy and Antoine, which covered the front of the French army; and were provided with a numerous artillery. This cannon keeping a heavy fire on the flanks of the Engliſh infantry, which were cloſe to the two villages, the battalions inclined towards the center, in order to avoid the fire, and there formed behind each other. This was the origin of that column, and is a remarkable inſtance of the influence that chance has on human affairs, which often produces events attributed afterwards to mature reflection and profound deſign.

The column has another defect; which is, that the ranks and files being ſo cloſely condenſed, the enemy's artillery pours the greater deſtruction among them. So, at Fontenoy, it was at length determined to bring cannon to bear upon the column, after it had penetrated the French lines, and rendered the ſucceſs of the day doubtful.

Beſides,

Beſides, the uſual obſtacles on the march of ditches, trees, hedges, broken ground, impede more a large body of men condenſed together, than the ſame number formed into diſtinct bodies; and, when once put in confuſion, the former is with much more difficulty brought into order again; in the ſame manner as it is much more difficult to repair a machine, when once damaged, that is compoſed of ſeveral pieces, than one that conſiſts only of a ſingle piece.

From all which the Count concluded, that his friend Folard was wrong in thinking the column the moſt perfect and ſucceſsful military order in all caſes, and in every ſituation. But he was not wrong, ſaid the King, in his prognoſtic reſpecting Count Saxe, when in the defender of Crachnick he foreſaw the conqueror of Flanders. But what am I about?

——— Deſine pervicax
Sermones referre deorum, et
Magna modis tenuare parvis.

LET-

LETTER IV.

On the intended Expedition of Julius Cæſar againſt the Parthians.

To Signor Don Giuseppe Pecis.

THERE is nothing I have ever received from the friendſhip of father Friſi, but has been highly pleaſing to me. Noble and elevated minds, like his, which mount up to the heavens, and penetrate into the moſt ſecret receſſes of the mundane ſyſtem, muſt neceſſarily add to the ſum of human felicity. There is nothing for which I conſider myſelf under a greater obligation to him, than for the knowledge he gave me of your late military production. During his ſtay in Bologna, we paſſed a few hours each day, to my infinite advantage, in the council of war of one of the greateſt generals in the world. I found in your book ſtrength and vigour of language, though not written in your own; grandeur of deſign, propriety of means, lively relations of important facts, and the moſt acute and judicious

judicious remarks on them: you have ſhewn how much meditation may improve, and even exceed, practice. All this is however but the prolegomena of your analyſis, your great work on Julius Cæſar. It is impoſſible for me to expreſs the impatience with which I expect it, and how long the time appears to me, till I ſhall have an opportunity of reading it, and ſtudying it at my leiſure. It appears indeed very extraordinary, that in ſuch an age as ours, a work of this kind ſhould be wanting, and that ſome man of genius has not undertaken to do that on the whole of Cæſar's wars, which Puyſegur has done on the enterpriſe of Durazzo, and the expedition into Spain, and Guiſchard on the ſiege of Marſeilles, and the campaign in Africa. I remember having heard Marſhal Keith relate, that on aſking Folard, why he did not rather comment on Julius Cæſar than Polybius, he anſwered, that Polybius gave him a larger ſcope for his reflections, and an occaſion of diſcuſſing naval topics, which are very little touched upon by the other. Now who knows but Folard's true reaſon was, that he could not in Julius Cæſar's

tactics find the leaſt ſhadow of a column, nor any paſſage on which he could put ſuch an interpretation as thence to deduce this order of battle? However that may be, it has been reſerved for you to give us this commentary. You will obtrude nothing on us that is not really in the text, nor will any part of it eſcape you: and you will follow, in all his marches and counter-marches, in all his flights, him whom no one can keep pace with.

You touch upon a very intereſting matter in your prolegomena, which I hope to ſee treated at length in the book itſelf, the plan of the war which Cæſar intended to make againſt the Parthians. The manifeſto of the war we have in Lucan:

Cumque ſuperba foret Babylon ſpolianda trophæis
Auſoniis, umbrâque erraret Craſſus inultâ.

But how could Julius Cæſar have managed to get the better of a warlike people, who had defeated an army commanded by his colleague, and gave afterwards ſo much trouble to his relation

Mark

Mark Antony? The exact deſcription which Ovid gives us of this people,

Gens fuit et campis, et equis, et tuta ſagittis,
Et circumfuſis invia fluminibus,

may ſerve to ſhew at one point of view the extreme difficulties with which this war would have been attended. This deſcription of the Parthians is exactly conformable to the preſent condition of the Tartars, their deſcendants, with whom Munich and Laſcy have lately been at war: and it is to be preſumed, that Cæſar would have employed againſt them the ſame policy with thoſe two commanders. You know that this war was entirely out of the beaten track, and for a long time ſtaggered the faith of the military critics. The Ruſſian army uſed to march through thoſe vaſt plains or deſerts of Tartary in a hollow ſquare, with their baggage in the center, and the cavalry on the angles; whilſt their Coſacks, Calmucks, and Huſſars, ſpread themſelves at large, and ſcoured the plains. Thus the army moved like a fortreſs, in perfect ſecurity from the deſultory attacks of the Tartars, who flew about the country in ſmall

bodies, relying on their dexterity, with the bow, and the ſwiftneſs of their horſes. The Ruſſian infantry were protected by their pikes, and the *chevaux-de friſe*, which they took along with them. This method of marching in a ſquare, practiſed by Xenophon in his celebrated retreat, and even by Craſſus himſelf, Cæſar certainly was not ignorant of; and would have doubtleſs adopted it, when he ſaw occaſion. His infantry was trained to every kind of ſervice, and accuſtomed to ſuſtain the ſhock of cavalry: of which it gave a ſtriking proof in the African war, when a ſmall body of his legionary ſoldiers had to oppoſe the whole of the enemy's horſe, under the conduct of Labienus; and, though ſurrounded, put them to flight, and extricated themſelves from the danger. He had a good number of German horſemen in his army, intermixed with light-armed infantry, who fought together; the foot-men taking hold of the horſes manes, and keeping pace with them in their moſt rapid movements: a method of fighting, which, like a true Proteus, he had adopted from Arioviſtus. Of Gallic cavalry, at that time in the greateſt

greateſt repute, he had a ſtill larger proportion; they were of prodigious ſervice to him in his different wars, a few troops of them having often put to flight ſome thouſands of Mooriſh cavalry: and being then ſupreme maſter of the empire, *rerum potitus*, it is not likely that he would have wanted Numidian horſe to oppoſe, like the Calmucks and Coſacks, to the light cavalry of the Parthians. We may reſt aſſured, that a perſon of his dexterity could not have failed to poſſeſs himſelf of ſome of the enemy's horſe, to learn from themſelves their method of fighting, and from imitating, to come at laſt to excel them. From them he would likewiſe have acquired a knowledge of the country, of the courſe of rivers, the nature of the ground, the poſition of hills, and ſituation of places; particularly as he had the example of Craſſus before his eyes, who was ruined for want of intelligence, and had himſelf in his paſſage to England been near periſhing for want of pilots, together with his whole army,

It is not to be ſuppoſed, that rivers would have been any great impediment to him in his march, as they were not ſince to the Ruſſians. He was remarkably ingenious in the conſtruction of bridges, and was the firſt that threw one over the Rhine. Beſides, ſwimming was an eſſential part in the education of the Roman children, who were inſtructed in this practice as regularly as they were taught to read.

Moreover, the patience, diſcipline, and ſobriety of the Roman ſoldiers, would in this deſert country have extremely facilitated the enterpriſe; as the ſame virtues, revived among the Ruſſians, did afterwards to Laſcy and Munich. An encampment being choſen on the enemy's frontier, and fortified according to his own excellent method, he would thence have puſhed a chain of forts to ſecure the communication between his own and the enemy's country; the practice of the Europeans now in America, formerly that of Agricola, when he marched to the conqueſt of Scotland, and lately that of Munich, when entering from Ucrania,

and

and of Laſcy from Aſoph, into the Crimea. Once that he had made himſelf maſter of the capital, or of any other large town of the enemy, the expedition was nearly crowned with ſucceſs; which the Ruſſian generals could not attain in Crimea, by not having been able to take Caffa, the key of the Black Sea, and of the whole peninſula. This done, they would have had better cauſe for their exultations:

Quid tibi nunc ſolitæ mitti poſt terga ſagittæ,
Quid loca, quid rapidi profuit uſus equi?
Parthe, refers aquilas, victos quoque porrigis arcus,
Pignora jam noſtri nulla pudoris habes.

I know not whether I have hit the mark; for

In neſſun' altra coſa l'uom più erra,
Piglia più granchi, e fa più gran marroni
Certo che nelle coſe della guerra *.

What aſſures me that I have not gone beyond it, is that experience, of which you ſpeak in your book, collected from the events of different ages, which reduces

* There is nothing in which we are more liable to miſtakes and errors, than in affairs relating to war.

duces into a ſyſtem the obſervations made on a ſeries of actions, which, having been conducted in the ſame manner, have univerſally been attended with the ſame ſucceſs. This, however, I may venture to aſſert with confidence, that, having finiſhed the enterpriſe againſt the Parthians, Cæſar would never have been led into that wild ſcheme imputed to him by Plutarch. Parthia being ſubdued, inſtead of making him return from Babylon to Rome, with the glorious trophy of the recaptured eagles, *(ſignis receptis)*, he makes him paſs into Hircania, and afterwards to the left, to conquer the whole country between the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas. Not content with making him penetrate in his paſſage into the mountains of Dagheſtan and the Laſghis, where the valour of Tamerlane, and that of Nadir, have ſince met with a check, and into thoſe other horrid countries bordering on the Caſpian, he makes him advance, directing his courſe northward, through the midſt of the Nogaian Tartars, between the Volga and the Jana; and is very near ſending him into Siberia. Afterwards making him incline to the weſt-

weſtward, he drags him with his legions through the vaſt country of Sarmatia, and, that conquered, from lake to lake, and foreſt to foreſt, into Germany. Thence, having taken him acroſs the Rhine, he leads him into his own province of Gaul, and finally conducts him in triumph to the Capitol and to Rome, after his having appointed the ocean as the boundary of his empire.

A finely-planned and well-digeſted expedition this for him, who in the fire of manhood, having thrown a bridge upon the Rhine, and paſſed his army over it, did not think it adviſeable to proceed any farther, to attack the Germans in their woods and faſtneſſes; but was contented with the terror he had cauſed among them, and having remained eighteen days on the other ſide of the river, thought he had done enough for his own glory and advantage, as he himſelf ſaid, and, repaſſing his army, deſtroyed the bridge.

Perhaps the celebrated march of Xenophon through a conſiderable part of Aſia,

firſt toward the north, and afterwards toward the weſt, ſuggeſted to Plutarch, who was always ſearching for parallels, the idea of this expedition of Julius Cæſar: but what was neceſſity in the one, would have been choice in the other; what was reſolution in the Greek, would have been temerity in the Roman.

The truth is, as any one may obſerve, that Plutarch is far from being exact in what he has written relating to the Romans. He knew little or nothing of their language, as he confeſſes in his Life of Demoſthenes, when he declares that he cannot, on account of that ignorance, enter into a compariſon between the eloquence of Demoſthenes and that of Tully. Having come to Rome on private buſineſs in his younger years, and having long after been employed in delivering philoſophical lectures in Greek, he had not time to acquire the Latin language. In his more advanced time of life, he applied himſelf to it in Cheronea: and he ſays himſelf, that the knowledge he had of things was of much uſe in pointing out to him the meaning of terms; which is

not,

not, as his tranſlator Dacier remarks, the beſt method of learning a language. The ſame perſon likewiſe expoſes a great number of overſights in his Roman hiſtories, and particularly in the Life of Cæſar. He there tranſpoſes many remarkable facts, or confounds them with one another; inſtances of which may be found in his lame and defective account of the battle of Alexia. In the memorable battle of Pharſalia, he places Pompey at the head of the right wing, which, being covered by a ſmall river, neither could have, nor had in fact, any ſhare whatever in the action: whereas Pompey was on the left, where he had placed all his cavalry, and reſted all his hopes of victory. In like manner he deſcribes Cæſar's order of battle in direct oppoſition to Cæſar himſelf, and makes a fourth line, which he draws up obliquely behind the cavalry, to ſtrengthen the right wing againſt the multitude of Pompey's horſe, and to thwart his manœuvres. How many matters of the higheſt importance does he not alſo entirely omit! The naval victory, amongſt others, which Cæſar obtained over the Bretons, one of the

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moſt expert nations of Gaul in maritime affairs, which character they retain to this day; an engagement ſingular for the dextrous manœuvres of the Romans, and for its importance in reſtoring the tranquillity of the Britiſh channel.

Nor is it to be wondered at that Plutarch made theſe blunders in his accounts of the Roman affairs; not thoroughly comprehending the language, he could not go to the ſources of information. He had not read the Commentaries of Cæſar, but confounds them with the Ephemerides of that great man. He had not read the Letters to Atticus, as appears in his Life of Cicero, which furniſh the moſt faithful portrait of that more ambitious than republican orator, and the beſt memoirs of thoſe times, which gave play to ſuch a variety of human paſſions. He ſays, that by converſation we are to inform ourſelves of thoſe particulars that may have eſcaped hiſtorians, and which, being preſerved in the memory of men, acquire from tradition a better claim to credibility. I know not whether our modern critics, the *Le Clercs* and the *Muratori*, would

would judge by this criterion. He ſeems to have followed the ſame maxims in philoſophy, where, by not deriving his information from the fountain-head, he inveighs bitterly againſt the Stoics, imputing to the founders of that ſect the ſtrange tenets of ſome of their diſciples.

Certain it is, however, that for the beſt information we have of the Roman affairs, we are indebted to the Greeks. It is conſiſtent both with reaſon and nature that it ſhould be ſo; for every thing is new to a foreigner: he informs himſelf of the inſtitutions, laws, and cuſtoms of the countries he viſits, and of the origin of them; which he communicates minutely to his countrymen, as ignorant and curious as he himſelf was. Thus the beſt hiſtory we have of the league of Cambray, is written by the learned and ingenious Abbé Du Bos. Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, Polybius, and Joſephus, who, having written in Greek, may be admitted into this claſs, give a more ſatisfactory account of the Roman manners, of their diſcipline, of their mode of fighting, encamping, &c. than the Romans themſelves,

ſelves, who wrote for perſons fully acquainted with all theſe particulars. But theſe Greeks had a fundamental knowledge of their language, and had paſſed a great part of their lives among them. Joſephus, as well as others, might have taken for his motto;

——— *Quæque ipſe miſerrima vidi,*
Et quorum pars magna fui.

They built but little upon vague and uncertain tradition; which, like fable, gives to one the attributes of another; which tells of actions that were never done, nor even ſo much as thought of; which converts a mere man into a hero, and a hero into a god. From this origin Plutarch derived many of thoſe anecdotes which he has inſerted in his Lives; thence he drew that romantic expedition of Julius Cæſar, to be undertaken after the ſubjection of the Parthians. That idea of Plutarch's does not appear to be very well founded, that more knowledge may be derived from the converſation of the living, than the ſtudy of the dead. But it appears far more probable, that men in former times were much of the ſame

mould

mould as they are at preſent; and that the diſcourſe that prevailed in the polite circles, and in the Baths at Rome, was of the ſame caſt with what we hear at our tea-tables, and in our modern coffee-houſes.

I expect with impatience the pleaſure of ſeeing your work, where you will inveſtigate minutely this matter, which I have here but ſlightly touched upon.

LET-

LETTER V.

On Charles the Twelfth of Sweden.

To Signor Don Giuseppe Pecis.

YOU apply to me, as a perſon who has lived much among the northern courts, to clear up certain doubts reſpecting Charles the Twelfth. I will endeavour, to the beſt of my power, to reſolve your queſtions reſpecting a prince who was for a length of time the polar ſtar of the military world, and will remain to after-ages its moſt dazzling meteor. You may at any rate reſt aſſured, that I ſhall not give you a ſingle anecdote, but what I have heard from thoſe who were eye-witneſſes to every tranſaction.

To begin with the viſit he paid to his principal enemy king Auguſtus at Dreſden, you need not entertain the ſmalleſt doubt of it, however extraordinary it may appear to you. Charles was not a man of the common ſtamp: he might ſay,

ſay, like father Arduin, What! do I riſe every morning two hours before day, to think like the reſt of mankind? In fact, it was a whim that he determined to indulge. The Swediſh army was then on its march towards Ruſſia. One morning, as it was filing off not far from Dreſden, the king ſuddenly departed with two companions on horſeback, directing his courſe to the city. One of his attendants he leaves at the gate as a centinel, and rides immediately to the palace with the other, whom he leaves in the ſame manner; giving him his horſe in charge, while he aſcends the ſtairs, and enters the apartments of king Auguſtus, before he had riſen from his bed. Thus was the king obliged to get up without ceremony, and dreſs himſelf in the preſence of the man who had juſt before driven him from his throne. Charles remained with him about three quarters of an hour; during which time he ſcarcely ever took his eyes off him, nor would give him an opportunity of ſpeaking to any perſon; not even to a page or valet, much leſs to the miniſter, who came as ſoon as he heard of the king of Sweden's arrival. It

happened, as they were walking through the rooms of the palace, that Charles firſt paſſed through one of the doors, when the miniſter ſeized that opportunity of making ſigns, to know whether it was the king's pleaſure that he ſhould be detained; to which he made a ſignal in the negative. The viſit turned out a mere affair of ceremony; and Charles being conducted by Auguſtus to the gate of the palace, he there mounted his horſe, and ſet off full ſpeed to join his army, which he found in the utmoſt anxiety about him. As ſoon as it was known that the king had entered Dreſden, not ſeeing him return immediately, they thought every quarter of an hour an age, and became ſo impatient as to think of no leſs than marching up to the town, and laying ſiege to it, in order to recover their prince.

When in quarters in Saxony, his deſign was to march into the heart of the empire, and with his victorious arms to give law to Europe, which was then divided about the Spaniſh ſucceſſion. Many reaſons have been given for the

ſtep

ſtep he took afterwards, of leaving the empire, and turning his arms againſt Ruſſia. What principally urged him to this was, according to the beſt-received authors, a note of one hundred thouſand pounds ſterling given to ſomebody by the Duke of Marlborough.

Momentumque fuit mutatus Curio rerum.

The Duke finiſhed the buſineſs of exaſperating him againſt the Czar, towards whom he had already a violent animoſity; and pointed out to him the glory of cruſhing his only rival, and of becoming the arbiter of the north, which would in the end make him the arbiter of Europe. There were two ways to march into Ruſſia; the one by Livonia, a Swediſh country on the ſea-coaſt, abounding with grain, which would ſubſiſt his army; whence entering into the fertile provinces of Ruſſia, he might direct his march to Moſcow, with eaſe and convenience, along the banks of navigable rivers: the other was by Poland and Ucrania, to which he was invited by the Coſack Mazeppa, a malcontent, who promiſed him every kind

of aſſiſtance; and by this route he might fall at once upon Moſcow, which would decide the fate of Ruſſia. Of theſe two, Charles himſelf choſe that which was more worthy of his courage than his prudence; as was fully proved by the hardſhips his troops were obliged to go through, and the extreme miſery to which they were at length reduced.

Charles's laſt campaign againſt the Danes, wherein he loſt his life, was planned indeed entirely by himſelf; which was not the caſe with regard to his firſt enterpriſes, that were followed with ſo great ſucceſs: in theſe, though he was the Achilles, ſome other was the Chiron. It was always his cuſtom to charge the enemy at the head of his cavalry: the diſpoſition of the battle was left to Levenhaupt. The famous diſembarkation at Copenhagen, with which Charles, while yet a youth, opened his military career, was projected by general Stuart; the attack of the enemy's trenches at Narva, which brought to mind the exploits of the Greeks againſt the Perſians, by one Gundvil, General Altendorff conceived

the

the idea of the famous paſſage of the Duna, where ſome rafts being floated down the ſtream with wet ſtraw on them, which was ſet fire to, the Swediſh army paſſed the river, covered by the ſmoke from the enemy, who was to leeward; a ſtratagem firſt put in practice by Hannibal.

His army was ſtrengthened by the preſence of ſeveral brave and experienced generals, who had ſerved under Charles the Eleventh, his father; who might be of infinite ſervice to him in council, as Philip's officers were to Alexander. It was not ſo with the Czar, his enemy, who derived inſtruction from his defeats alone. He reaped more benefit, however, from theſe defeats, than Charles did even from his victories. The ſucceſs of the engagement at Pultowa he owed entirely to himſelf; in which he had to do with the moſt terrible enemy he ever had upon his hands; over whom this battle gave him a complete and deciſive advantage, a battle that might be called the modern Pharſalia.

Charles

Charles having arrived, after ſuffering many difficulties, in Ucrania, found the great promiſes of Mazeppa, who had engaged to ſubſiſt his army, reduced to nothing. Being in the greateſt diſtreſs for want of proviſions, partly through the diſappointment he met with from Mazeppa, and partly from the defeat of Levenhaupt on his march to the army with 15,000 men, and a conſiderable eſcort of ammunition and proviſions, he came to the reſolution of laying ſiege to Pultowa. In this place the Czar had collected a quantity of proviſions, and had left a ſtrong garriſon to defend it. By the capture of it, Charles might reſtore plenty to his army, and ſecure a good poſt for his head-quarters, whence he might direct the future operations of the war. Various were the opinions in the Ruſſian army, during the ſiege, of the ſteps that ſhould be taken by them: Some were for incloſing the Swedes by an entrenchment, and reducing them through hunger to a capitulation: others were for laying waſte the country for a hundred leagues around, and leaving them to periſh without the riſk of a battle,

But

But fearing that the town, which was vigorouſly attacked, would be obliged to ſurrender, and that Charles would be enabled to refreſh his army, the Ruſſians at laſt determined on not delaying any longer to give him battle. The Czar gave the more readily into this meaſure, as he knew that Charles's impetuous diſpoſition would induce him to ſeize eagerly the occaſion of a general action with the Ruſſian army, however it might be to his own diſadvantage. He marched then early in the morning, ſo as to arrive in time to encamp in the entrance of a wood, near the king of Sweden; who, he ſuppoſed, would prepare matters to attack him the next morning. Thus judged the Czar, and thus it really happened. But in the night the Czar gave orders for ſeven redoubts to be raiſed in the wood, juſt in front of his infantry. This was for two different purpoſes; one to check the impetuoſity and break the order of the Swedes in their firſt onſet, which by experience he had ſufficient reaſon to dread; the other, that he might not ſhut up his troops in a continued line of entrenchment, but afford

them

them the means of ſallying out upon the enemy through the intervals between the redoubts; a method of fortifying an encampment highly applauded by Marſhal Saxe, and thenceforward eſteemed the moſt perfect. The king went forth in the morning, full of ardour, and flushed with the hopes of conqueſt; but it was ſome time before he took notice of the Czar's diſpoſition. The conſequence was, that, though the Ruſſian horſe were beaten, and three of the redoubts taken by ſtorm, the Swedes had in the end the worſt of the action; which was equal to a deciſive victory on the part of the Ruſſians.

The king of Sweden excelled more in the field than in council, was more capable of executing than planning any great deſign: he might be compared to a ſhell, which does ſometimes prodigious execution; but it muſt be when under the direction of an able bombardier.

When he had occaſion to conſult with others, which was but ſeldom, he never did

did it in a direct manner; but propoſed a general queſtion to thoſe in whom he placed the higheſt confidence, and took their different opinions on the ſubject. This might have been the effect of pride, or perhaps of that maxim of princes and ſtateſmen, to adviſe with others, without diſcloſing their own ſentiments.

All the world knows the averſion this great man had for women; but very few know whence it originated. He had ſcarcely mounted the throne, when, breathing nothing but war, he was continually employed in thinking of the moſt effectual and deſtructive means of making it. A certain profeſſor of Stockholm had communicated to him a new invention in the branch of ordnance, with which he was ſo much pleaſed as to order him immediately to make the experiment. Impatient for the completion of the work, he went very early one morning all alone to the profeſſor's houſe, who was in bed, having been taken ill the day before with a fever. After knocking for a conſiderable length of time at the door, he was let in, and

had a conference with the profeſſor on the ſubject that his mind was ſo fully taken up with. At his departure he was preceded by a young girl, a ſervant of the profeſſor's, who carried a lantern, and had ſome pretenſions to beauty. The king took a fancy to the girl, which ſhewed he was not indifferent to the ſex, and began to take ſome liberties with her: but ſhe, being perhaps a native of Dalecarlia, with a heart congenial to the ſoil, did not much reliſh this freedom of the king, and in return treated him rather roughly. We are aſſured, that this repulſe made ſo deep an impreſſion on the king's mind, that he abſolutely refuſed in Poland to ſee the counteſs of Konigſmarck, and for ever baniſhed the ſex from his company and his pleaſures.

Magnanimity, which you allow him, he certainly poſſeſſed to a very high degree. I ſhall give you an inſtance of it, by an anecdote which Plutarch would not have omitted, had he written the life of Charles. He happened to be one day, after his return from Turkey, riding out, with a ſmall number of attendants, whom

whom he left, and went on conſiderably before. Being come to the gate of a field he had to paſs through, he opened it, and neglected to ſhut it again, according to the laws of the country. The owner of the ground, who was an enſign in the army, being near at hand, and not being acquainted with Charles's perſon, called out to know why he did not ſhut the gate after him, according to the king's orders, and, as he paſſed, made uſe of ſome uncivil expreſſions. Why do you not go and ſhut it yourſelf? anſwers the king. This ſo enrages the gentleman, that he ſeizes the bridle, and ſtops the horſe. On this Charles puts his hand to his ſword; but the other, being too ſtrong for him, ſnatches it from him. The king then draws out a piſtol, and threatens to make the other repent it, unleſs he immediately lays down the ſword on a ſtone that was cloſe by. You would not be ſo valiant, ſays the gentleman, if I was alſo provided with a piſtol. Go, and fetch one, ſays the king. The gentleman on this goes for a piſtol, while the king waits his return. As he was coming back in high

dudgeon, he eſpies the king's attendants at a little diſtance; which giving him ſome ſuſpicion, he makes his retreat. The noblemen, who had joined the king, ſeeing him take up his ſword without ſaying a word, did not venture to aſk him any queſtions, but followed him in ſilence. It happened that not long after, the regiment, in which this gentleman was an enſign, became vacant, and was given to one of the noblemen who had that day attended the king. The gentleman thought it neceſſary to inform his colonel of all the particulars, and deſired he would contrive to extricate him from the difficulty. The day being arrived, on which the regiment was to paſs in review, the enſign does not make his appearance. His majeſty obſerves to the colonel, There is an officer miſſing. He is informed, that the officer is on guard. Let him be ſent for, ſays the king. The enſign is accordingly brought forth, God knows with what ſenſations. The king immediately gallops up to him, then ſtops, and looking upon him ſtedfaſtly, names him to a firſt lieutenancy,

and

and orders a good round number of florins to be counted out to him.

There are many other inſtances related of his magnanimity, which it would be too tedious to enumerate; amongſt which, I know not whether you will place that reſolution of his, not to have his wound dreſſed, after hearing of the total defeat of his army at Pultowa, and his tearing off the dreſſings, like another Cato.

A certain particular in the anecdotes of Charles's life, you, who are ſo curious in inveſtigating the human heart, will be glad to know; which is, that he ſometimes recommended to the chaplains of his army, in the ſermons which among the Lutherans are preached to the ſoldiers, to take the following text:

Manete in vocatione in quâ vocati eſtis.

As Petrarch often raiſed his thoughts to the third circle of the heavens, where he ſuppoſed his Laura was with the other devoted ſlaves of love; ſo did Charles to the circle of the God of War, which was

his

his heaven. He was frequently overheard by his domeſtics counterfeiting firſt the noiſe of drums, then that of artillery, and finally the report of ſmall arms; when he would all on a ſudden clap his hand to the ſword which he always wore by his ſide; his imagination transforming the chairs and tables in the room into horſe and foot-men.

During his ſtay at Bender, having heard mention of the length of time a man may live without nouriſhment, and of the faſting and auſterity practiſed by the Santons, and by the oriental Jews, he took it in his head to try the ſtrength of his own conſtitution in this particular. He held out for a week, taking only a glaſs of water each day; and at the ſame time omitting none of his ordinary exerciſes, among others, that of riding ten leagues on horſeback. On the eighth day he found an inclination to eat: ſo he took ſome food, but not, as one would ſuppoſe, what was very light and eaſy of digeſtion, but ſome good ſubſtantial meat, and in no ſmall quantity. This, however, affected neither his health nor his

his ſtomach, ſo as to prevent him from purſuing his ordinary courſe of living.

Whenever he played at Cheſs, as he frequently did to paſs away the time at Bender, he always moved the king towards the front as ſoon as poſſible. To cover himſelf was entirely out of the queſtion; and if ever a pawn happened to be in his way, he did not puzzle himſelf long about the method of moving him, but knocked him at once off the board. Such influence has that genius, or natural diſpoſition, that is born along with us, which in Charles ſhewed its prevalence to the laſt: for, after receiving his fatal blow at Frederickſtadt, he was found with his hand upon the hilt of his ſword.

Thus you have a ſlight ſketch, but an original one at leaſt, of the rival of Peter the Great, to whoſe great qualities he was at length obliged to give way. Guſtavus Adolphus, who attended the lectures of our Galileo at Padua, and united the characters of the ſoldier and the politician, was, doubtleſs, a much greater

greater man; notwithſtanding Guſtavus committed an overſight, in neglecting to follow up his victory of Leipſic. Having completely routed his enemies in that battle, inſtead of marching ſtraight into Bohemia, he was content with detaching there his ally the elector of Saxony, who carried on the war without ſpirit, and was ſoon gained over by the Auſtrians. Guſtavus divided and diſſipated his force, like a great river that overflows its banks, and went here and there throughout Germany, beſieging towns, and laying countries under contribution; but knew not how to contract and abridge the war, according to the Roman and Turkiſh method. He gave time to the enemy to recover himſelf, and loſt all his former advantages: ſo that he was obliged at Lutzen to re-commence that game which he had before won, and which then terminated with his life.

It appears to me, beyond all diſpute, that the greateſt man among the Swediſh monarchs was Guſtavus Vaſa. He found the means of well regulating and directing

ing the natural ſtrength of his country; and did not attempt to puſh it beyond its proper bounds; but made ſo judicious a uſe of it within the kingdom, that without him it could neither have been extended ſo far beyond the limits of the realm by Guſtavus Adolphus, nor ſo glorioufly miſguided, as it was afterwards, by Charles the Twelfth.

I LET-

LETTER VI.

On the taking of Bergen-op-Zoom.

To Signor FRANCESCO MARIA ZANOTTI,

Secretary to the Bologna Academy.

IT was a matter of aſtoniſhment to all Europe, to hear that Count Saxe, the commander in chief of the French army in Flanders, had determined on the ſiege of Bergen-op-Zoom; but how much more ſo, to hear, a few weeks after, that Lowendahl, who was left to conduct the ſiege, had carried it by aſſault! Beſides the Marſhal's ſtaff, which he has obtained by this conqueſt, he will juſtly acquire the title of the *Poliorcetes* of the preſent age.

This enterpriſe muſt indeed be acknowledged a glorious one, yet owes a great part of its glory to Fortune, which for ſome time back has ſeemed diſpoſed to favour the French. Bergen-op-Zoom is one of the barrier-towns of Holland, the

the maſter-piece of the famous Coehorn. The works are very extenſive, and mined almoſt in every part: by ſubterranean paſſages there is a communication with an entrenched camp without the town, where an army can ſubſiſt in perfect ſecurity. It has beſides an open communication with the ſea.

It has been aſſerted, that there is no place in the world entirely impregnable. This aſſertion is perhaps ill founded. Konigſtein in Saxony may be an inſtance to the contrary; a place ſituated on a very ſteep mountain, with a running ſpring within, and a ſufficiency of arable land to maintain the little garriſon requiſite to defend it. But, ſetting aſide this fortreſs, which ſeems to be intended by nature for the Baſtille of Saxony, or the repoſitory of the treaſures of Gren-Velt in caſe of war, what ſhall we ſay of Gibraltar? The Engliſh indeed took it without difficulty in the Spaniſh war; but then it had not an adequate defence, either by ſea or land: whereas now, that it has a ſtrong garriſon, with plenty of proviſions, and a numerous fleet in its har-

bour, what man in his ſenſes can ſuppoſe it is in any danger of being taken? They muſt firſt triumph over the Engliſh flag, drive them from what they conſider their proper element, and ſend out a powerful navy to ſcour the ocean and preſerve the dominion of it.

Bergen-op-Zoom does not yield to Gibraltar in regard to its communication with the ſea; and has the further advantage of being ſupported by an entrenched camp, whence the garriſon may be relieved every day, if neceſſary. A hedge defended by a body of grenadiers, who had it in their power to relieve one another, might defy the attacks of a Vauban; while, on the other hand, a Bergen-op-Zoom, with a ſufficient garriſon, but commanded by a . . . . . is no better than a hedge.

The famous Benjamin Robinſon, the beſt military mathematician of the age, being called over from England by the prince of Orange, to aſſiſt in the defence of the place, on his arrival found it taken. Having minutely examined every

part

part of it, he declared that it was as tenable when the French entered it by aſſault, as it was when they firſt began their approaches; and that, if it had been defended as it ſhould have been, neither force nor ſtratagem could have reduced it. Marſhal Schmettaw, who knew the practical part as well as the other did the theory, and to whom a journal of the beſiegers and the beſieged was ſent twice a week, was ready from the beginning to lay any wager againſt Lowendahl, if, as he ſaid himſelf, the Hollanders only made uſe of a ſingle arm to defend it.

How then was it taken? Why, the commandant did not take the leaſt precaution, or follow the moſt ſimple rules of his profeſſion. He neither made timely ſallies, ſprung his mines, nor gave any other interruption to the approaches of the enemy. He neither filled the ditch with water, nor, in a word, obſerved a ſingle article of what was preſcribed in a manuſcript, left by Coehorn himſelf, for the inſtruction of thoſe who might on a future occaſion have to defend

ſend the place, like a father's laſt will in favour of a beloved daughter. This valuable manuſcript was found among the common lumber of the governor, who gave himſelf ſo little concern, that one morning, while the French were, contrary to cuſtom, mounting quietly a breach which they had made in one of the baſtions of the place, he was extended at his eaſe upon a feather-bed, not caring either to expoſe his perſon, or even to beſtow a thought on the defence of his garriſon; ſo that they paid him a viſit in his very houſe, and, on waking him out of his ſleep, hailed him their priſoner.

LET-

LETTER VII.

On the Military Power of the European Mercantile Companies in Aſia.

To Signor PROSPERO JACKSON.

I Sometimes wonder, no leſs than you do, when I conſider the daily proofs that are given of the prodigious ſuperiority the Europeans poſſeſs over the Aſiatics. The different trading companies of Europe have not been contented with eſtabliſhing themſelves in the moſt advantageous ſituations in India, and the beſt adapted to their traffic; they have not been contented with building themſelves redoubts and fortreſſes, for the protection of commerce; but have gone ſo far as to uſurp a kind of ſovereign authority in the country, and to act more like princes than merchants. The Engliſh and French Eaſt-India companies hold all the Nabobs in awe, along the coaſt of Coromandel and the banks of the Ganges: theſe princes careſs them, and court their

their friendſhip and alliance: nay, inſtances have been ſeen of the company's ſervants dethroning monarchs, and diſpoſing of kingdoms at their pleaſure in thoſe diſtant regions.

This has been done heretofore by Mr. Dupleix on the ſide of Pondicherry, the center of the French eſtabliſhments. And has not Lord Clive, on the ſide of Bengal, lately exhibited a moſt ſplendid example of it? This man, who went to India in the company's ſervice, with a few guineas in his purſe, made war there like a *Paladin*, and, *regnis adſignatis*, like another Alexander along the Ganges, which he has made entirely Engliſh, returned back in a few years to his native country with a fortune of ſixty or ſeventy thouſand a year.

How comes it, that a mere handful of Europeans, in the pay of thoſe companies, can face whole armies of the Indian princes, engage them, and gain complete victories over them?

You,

You, who are endowed with ſo much natural penetration, improved by the ſtudy of the beſt authors, who can conſult a father of excellent ſenſe, not deſtitute of ſcience and erudition, who have beſides had ſo much experience in the affairs of the world, will, no doubt, ſoon trace the cauſe of ſo extraordinary a phænomenon in politics. For my own part, I think I ſhall be able, with the aſſiſtance of a little Engliſh book that has fallen into my hands, to diſcover the reaſon of it.

The Indians never reckoned much on their infantry; their armies always have been, and are to this day, chiefly compoſed of cavalry. They bring to the field their whole families along with them; and their camp is attended by a large train of artificers and traders of every deſcription, ſo as to reſemble a moving city.

Their principal hopes of victory reſt on the artillery; and their cannon, which carry balls of ſeventy pounds weight, are extremely difficult to manage. They

are much given to ſuperſtition, and always take omens of the good or ill fortune of the day, before they give battle. They are totally ignorant of the art of war, and have not the ſmalleſt idea of diſcipline: crammed full of rice and opium, one of which is their ordinary food, and the other their only luxury, their whole camp remains buried all night in a profound ſleep, without any guards or out-poſts for their ſecurity; ſo that many examples are to be found of whole armies having been ſurpriſed and maſſacred in the night.

On the day of battle their commanders are mounted on elephants at the head of their troops. On theſe they conſtantly keep their eyes fixed; and, ſhould they loſe ſight of them for a moment, they give up every thing for loſt, and diſperſe immediately. Theſe elephants are admirable butts for the European artillery, which, being lighter, is much more eaſily managed: in fact, a ſingle cannon-ſhot, well pointed, has often decided the fate of a battle.

The

The readineſs of the Europeans to change their methods and cuſtoms, as well in war as in every thing elſe, and to adopt whatever they find the moſt excellent in every art, is the principal cauſe of their ſuperiority over the Aſiatics; a people to the higheſt degree tenacious of their ancient cuſtoms and manners; who would not for the world act differently from what their anceſtors did ten centuries ago.

Aſia has been conſtantly under the government of eunuchs ſince the days of Cyrus. The inhabitants of this continent have ever bent their necks to the moſt enthralling deſpotiſm, without ſo much as attempting to emancipate themſelves from the yoke, or ſhewing any wiſh to breathe the ſweet and ſalutary air of liberty. Through this whole courſe of ages they have always preſerved the ſame fundamental habits of thinking and of living. Thus the Turks have not made any alteration in their military inſtitutions, nor in the faſhion of their dreſs, ſo ill calculated for war. It is this that has enabled

Scanderbeg, Sobieſki, Monticuccoli, and Eugene, to withſtand their innumerable armies, with the help of European diſcipline; it is hence that our heads are not, at the preſent moment, inſtead of hats, covered with turbans.

LETTER VIII.

On Admiral Anſon.

To Signor FRANCESCO MARIA ZANOTTI,

Secretary to the Bologna Academy.

AMONG the eminent characters of the preſent age, admiral Anſon will ever hold a diſtinguiſhed place; and the loſs of ſuch a man muſt be deeply regretted by every perſon of merit. I think you told me the other day, that you have never read the narrative of his voyage round the world, when I congratulated you on the pleaſure you have to come; as ſomebody once did with regard to the hiſtory of Don Quixote.

In

In the mean time, till you have an opportunity of reading that intereſting volume, I ſhall, in compliance with your own requeſt, give you a few particulars reſpecting the admiral, partly drawn from the book itſelf, and partly from the converſation I have had with ſome Engliſhmen. I have been extremely curious in queſtioning them about a man whom I ever held in the higheſt admiration, as one of the few who do not leave the world in the ſtate they find it.

His name began to be known in Europe at the beginning of the war which broke out between England and Spain, not long before the death of the emperor Charles the Sixth; a war of the merchants, as Sir Robert Walpole called it; whom they perſuaded with the utmoſt difficulty to enter into it, but whom they could never induce to proſecute it with vigour. Anſon got the command of a ſmall ſquadron, conſiſting, if I remember right, of five ſail of veſſels in all, the largeſt of which was the Centurion, in which he himſelf embarked; a ſhip become famous in maritime hiſtory, a third-

rate

rate in the line of battle, and mounting ſixty pieces of cannon. With this little ſquadron his orders were to harraſs the enemy's moſt diſtant colonies along the borders of the Pacific Ocean. All the world knows the difficulties he had to get over, I will not ſay in his paſſage, but in the anti-chamber of the miniſter, and at the admiralty, which was entirely devoted to him. It is alſo well known, how, having touched at the Braſils, he arrived at Cape Horn about the time of the vernal equinox, the moſt unfavourable ſeaſon of the year. Every one has heard of the damage he ſuſtained in a gale of wind that laſted for forty days together, in which two of his veſſels parted company, and could not double the Cape; of the terrible ſcurvy that prevailed among the ſhip's crew, and the ſoldiers on board, a great part of whom were old and invalid; a ſcurvy of a more malignant nature than the plague deſcribed by Thucydides. Every one has alſo heard of the taking of Paita, and of the other great atchievements the admiral accompliſhed with the little force he had left, after having ſtaid for a few months to refreſh at the iſland of

Juan

Juan Fernandez. If he had had but another ſhip left, he would have taken Panama; and admiral Vernon having at the ſame time taken, on the other ſide, Porto Bello in the Gulf of Mexico, he would have had the command of the two ſeas of Mexico and Peru, and in ſome meaſure have been maſter of the new world.

Reduced at length to the Centurion alone, he took, not far from Manilla, the Acapulco ſhip, which trades directly from America to Aſia; and, at the end of about four years, returned to England, as Jaſon formerly did to Greece, crowned with riches and glory.

All his deſigns were guided by prudence and valour: yet, on two occaſions, he was much indebted to the favour of Fortune. Having come to an anchor in the South Sea, off the iſle of Tinian, one of the ſmall iſlands that are thinly interſperſed in that vaſt ocean, which embraces near half the globe, he went on ſhore with his people to get refreſhment. It ſo happened, that one night, in a ſevere gale, the veſſel drove from her anchors,

and

and went out to ſea. For eighteen days they ſaw no more of her, though continually gazing towards the horizon; and therefore concluded that ſhe was entirely loſt. Thus had Anſon the dreary proſpect of being for ever confined amongſt the antipodes of his native country, in the midſt of a loneſome ſea, which is ploughed but once a year by a ſolitary Spaniſh ſhip. In fine, when they had totally given themſelves up to deſpair, and had begun to build themſelves huts, in the form of a little village, the ſhip returned with the few hands that had been left on board. You may eaſily form an idea of their joy at this happy and unexpected event. After a ſhort time ſpent in feſtivity and rejoicing, the little colony left their habitations; and, without giving themſelves the trouble of deſtroying them, re-embarked in the ſhip, in order to proſecute their voyage.

The ſecond inſtance of the interpoſition of Fortune in his favour was, when he came in ſight of his own coaſts, and fell in with a French fleet that was cruizing

cruizing in the channel; from which he was ſaved, as Homer's heroes were very often, by a thick fog. This induced him to take for a motto, with which the Engliſh decorate their arms, the very words that Horace aſcribes to Teucer, *Nil deſperandum*.

Being advanced to a higher rank in the ſervice, in the year 1747, he engaged, off Cape Finiſterre, Monſ. de Jonquiere, who, with a ſtrong ſquadron, was diſpatched to convoy, to a certain latitude, the fleets deſtined for the Eaſt and Weſt Indies; a new ſource of riches and glory to Anſon. He captured ſix of the enemy's ſhips; among which was the admiral's. Monſ. de Jonquiere, in delivering up his ſword to Anſon, obſerved, with that gaiety of humour, which the French do not lay aſide even in adverſity, "You have conquered the Invincible, and Glory attends you;" alluding to the names of two of the captured ſhips.

In recompence for ſuch important ſervices, he was created a peer of the realm;

on the death of Norris was appointed vice-admiral of England; and in the end was placed at the head of the admiralty. Notwithſtanding the various changes of miniſtry which of late took place in London, he retained that ſupreme charge, for which he was ſo well qualified, to the end of his days; and he died at length, graſping in his hand the Trident of Neptune, or, in other words, the Sceptre of the World.

He was a man of ſo few words, that he was reckoned ſilent even in his own country. In matters of love he was ſo cool, that having eſpouſed a Miſs York, and not having any iſſue by her, ſomebody made a pun, and not a bad one, upon the occaſion: "See that man, who went round the world, yet has not courage enough to go to York."

But, on the other hand, he was all fire on his own element. He introduced into the Engliſh navy, a diſcipline like that obſerved in the Pruſſian army: he revived that reſolute and cloſe method of fighting, within piſtol-ſhot, by which his

his predeceſſors Blake and Shovel had often gained ſuch glorious victories. It is chiefly to his activity that the Engliſh are indebted for the preſent extent of their commerce and naval grandeur.

The Centurion has poured out, like the Trojan horſe in days of yore, a number of heroes. Dennis and Brett, who are now blocking up the French and Spaniſh ſquadrons, Saunders, who had ſo great a ſhare in the conqueſt of Canada, Keppel, who diſtinguiſhed himſelf ſo much in the capture of Belleiſle, and has ſince taken Senegal and Goree from the enemy, were all lieutenants in that ſhip, and grew up under the diſcipline of Anſon.

If England owes him ſo much, the reſt of Europe is not a little indebted to him; if on no other account, for affording the ſubject of one of the beſt books that ever was written: I mean the narrative of his voyage, which is at the ſame time both inſtructive and entertaining; which to the authenticity of hiſtory joins the

marvellous relations of romance, and which holds a more diſtinguiſhed rank among modern productions, than the retreat of the ten thouſand does among the ancient. Mr. Walter, the chaplain of the Centurion, was for a long time the reputed author, his name being put in the front of the book: but it has been ſince diſcovered, that the champion of Newton's Fluxions in oppoſition to the Analyſis of biſhop Berkeley, Benjamin Robins, was the real author; who was thought worthy to be preſented, by the Royal Academy, with a golden medal, for his diſcoveries in artillery; and died in 1751, at Fort St. David, being then chief engineer in the ſervice of the Engliſh Eaſt-India company. This man can furniſh a ſtrong proof, that the moſt profound and abſtracted knowledge of ſcience is not incompatible with elegance of ſtyle and a fine genius,—if the poſition is not already ſufficiently eſtabliſhed by the examples of Maupertuis and D'Alembert, and above all by your own.

I wiſh it was in my power to ſend you, with this letter, one of thoſe bottles of

Madeira

Madeira that made the circuit of the world with Anſon, with which he treated his friends, not without much ſolemnity, on particular occaſions. You may imagine how exquiſite muſt be the reliſh of that wine, which, originally good, was exceedingly improved by ſo long a voyage; a liquor that might, in every ſenſe of the word, be called a glorious beverage.

LETTER IX.

On the War begun in 1755, between England and France.

To Count CHARLES CAGNONI,

Privy Counſellor to his Majeſty the King of Pruſſia.

HOW much the nature and principles of government may tend to the aggrandizement of a nation, was never more clearly ſhewn than in the late conſiderable riſe of the French power in North America. They poſſeſs but a ſmall

ſmall corner of that vaſt continent, the province of Canada; where the cold is intenſe, and the ſoil barren; being almoſt an entire ſcene of uncleared woods, and uncultivated country, waſhed by the Gulf of St. Laurence, which is unnavigable for above ſix months of the year, partly on account of the froſt, and partly the tempeſts and fogs, which, towards the end of the autumn, and the commencement of the ſpring, render the rocks and ſands, of which that ſea is full, almoſt inevitable: ſo that a voyage to Canada is reckoned more dangerous than to any other part of America. At the mouth of the Miſſiſippi, in the Gulf of Mexico, which is to the weſtward of Florida, they have founded New Orleans, an infant colony, at the immenſe diſtance of about three thouſand miles from the Gulf of St. Laurence. So they are pent up on one ſide by the power of Spain, and on the other by ſavage tribes, many of which are in the ſtricteſt terms of alliance and friendſhip with the Engliſh; who are always the rivals, often the enemies, of France.

The

The Engliſh are in poſſeſſion of the whole coaſt of America, from Florida to the Gulf of St. Laurence; a country fertile in its ſoil, and temperate in its climate. The northern provinces furniſh pitch, timber, and other neceſſaries for naval armaments. Virginia is entirely planted with tobacco; Carolina, with indigo and rice: in this latter, mulberry-trees have been planted, which promiſe to turn out well, and to yield good quantities of ſilk. They reckon in the different provinces above a million of induſtrious inhabitants; and their trade with them employs at leaſt fifteen hundred veſſels, and fifteen thouſand ſeamen. Their ports being ſituated on the open ſea, they can make two voyages to Europe, or the Weſt-Indies, for one that the French can, confined as they are within the land. For this reaſon they can afford to ſell at a lower rate thoſe ſpirituous liquors and woollen manufactures, which are the main articles of traffic between the Europeans and the inhabitants of that frigid continent.

Theſe

Theſe and other diſadvantages the French have uſed their utmoſt induſtry to counter-act, directing every operation to one end, pointing all their endeavours to the ſame object. The enterpriſing ſpirit of their adventurers, the bravery of their commanders, the intrigues of their miſſionaries, have in the courſe of time ſucceeded ſo far, whether by force or perſuaſion, as to bring the natives, who inhabit the banks of the lakes and rivers in that country, to be either their allies or ſubjects, and to detach them from all dependence on the Engliſh.

By theſe means they have contrived to eſtabliſh between Quebec and New Orleans, a chain of forts, in which one or two hundred men may ſometimes keep in ſubjection a whole people. They have ſecured the important paſs of Niagara; and, to cover and protect their forts, they have two ſtrong fortreſſes, one on the Ohio, as a check upon the Engliſh ſouthern colonies, the other on Crown Point, to keep within bounds thoſe to the northward: and by Fort

St. John's,

St. John's, which is on a river of that name in Acadia, that empties itſelf into the Bay of Fundy, they have a direct communication with the Ocean; which in a mercantile view may be called, as it has been by certain philoſophers, *the Father of all.* With theſe advantages they can engroſs the fur trade of all North America, and protect it; and as, by means of the great lakes and rivers which traverſe the continent, they have opened a paſſage from the northern ſeas into the ſea of Mexico, ſo they may likewiſe hope to diſcover one into the Southern, or Pacific Ocean, which is the *ſanctum ſanctorum* of the Spaniſh trade, an object of deſire and jealouſy to all the other maritime nations.

How ever long the French may have been in making and eſtabliſhing theſe encroachments, the fact is, that no inconſiderable part of the people of England, tranſplanted into the new world, and though all under the ſame ſovereign, yet divided into ſeveral ſtates, differing in their forms of government, and independent of each other, all animated by

the ſame deſire of gain, but employing very different means in the purſuit of it, after having loſt part of their commerce, are at length apprehenſive of being driven into the ſea by a handful of Frenchmen, who, animated by one ſoul, are already upon their borders, and are every day cloſing in more upon them.

Whilſt theſe things were going forward in America, in Europe an attempt was made towards an accommodation; and a congreſs was held at Bruſſels of ſome Engliſh and French commiſſaries, who gave themſelves an infinite deal of trouble to aſcertain the limits within which the two nations ſhould keep themſelves quiet in America. In 1713, the Engliſh had come into poſſeſſion of Acadia, a country of conſiderable extent to the northward of their colonies, partly waſhed by the Ocean, and partly by the Gulf of St. Laurence, one of the pitiful rewards for the victories of Eugene and Marlborough. The bounds of this province had never been exactly defined; which cauſed perpetual diſputes and diſſenſions, particularly ſince the Engliſh

had

had founded, at a prodigious expence, a new colony, of which the capital was called Halifax, which from the excellence of its port made the affair of the greater moment. In the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, the ſettlement of the boundaries of this province, inhabited promiſcuouſly by French and Engliſh, had been omitted; ſo that, five years after, diſſenſions about the extent of their dominion kindled a new war between the two nations.

Whilſt theſe diſputes were going forward about Acadia, the French working at their forts and tampering with the ſavages, general Braddock was ſent openly from England with a few thouſand men, which make in that country a very reſpectable army. Brave, but unwary, he gave into an ambuſcade, which the ſavages, together with a handful of French, had laid for him near that fine river, the Ohio, and fell together with the greateſt part of his army.

This news arriving at the ſame time with that of the loſs of Oſwego, the firſt

port the Engliſh had opened on lake Ontario, in order to extend their traffic among the diſtant tribes, firſt confounded the court of London, and afterwards rouſed it to more ſerious and deciſive meaſures. They immediately turned their thoughts to the natural force of the kingdom, their naval power, and quickly detached a ſquadron, under the command of an officer equally remarkable for bravery and conduct; I mean admiral Boſcawen, who made ſuch diſpatch as to arrive at Louiſbourg before the Marquis d' Antin, who was to ſail from Breſt with a ſtrong fleet for the American coaſt. The Engliſh have thus taken every precaution to ſtrengthen themſelves againſt their enemies.

Boſcawen has already captured two ſhips of war from the Marquis; of which the Duc de Mirepoix has made a bitter remonſtrance at the court of St. James's, no declaration of war having been previouſly made. Beſides which, the Engliſh have within a ſhort ſpace of time captured all the French Weſt-India ſhips homeward bound; a ſmall number indeed,

deed, perhaps not much exceeding an hundred, but an hundred laden with ſugar, indigo, coffee, and other light and rich commodities, which, though of ſmall bulk, are of great value: to which may be added the capture of ſo many ſeamen, a matter of no ſmall conſequence to the French in time of war. The other conſequences of this capture, ſuch as the bankruptcy that may enſue among their Weſt-India merchants, the diſtreſs which the inhabitants of the iſlands may ſuffer from the want of freſh ſupplies of proviſions, the communication between them and the mother-country being cut off, and their trade at a ſtand for God knows how long, I ſhall leave to the diſcuſſion and calculation of perſons better ſkilled than I am in mercantile affairs.

What more particularly merits our conſideration is, the method by which the cloud has ſpread itſelf, and the war become more general and more extended. As in literary circles, when a diſpute has ariſen on ſome particular ſubject, the heat of argument ſoon involves the diſputants in other queſtions, as from a

ſimple

ſimple aſtronomical problem, to the cauſe of the planetary revolutions, the ſoul of the univerſe; ſo has it happened on the preſent occaſion. The bone of contention was at firſt reſpecting a line to be drawn one or two hundred leagues higher or lower; a mere triſle in a country like Acadia, where, in the ſpace of twenty ſquare leagues, you will ſcarcely find four or five habitations: afterwards, whether the French were entitled to any poſſeſſions there at all, particularly on the ſea-coaſt, as the Fort St. John's was; and this circumſtance made the affair of greater moment. Why, ſaid they, ſhould ſeventy thouſand French, lately tranſplanted into Canada, be ſuffered to diſturb a whole million of Engliſh, for years back eſtabliſhed in America, and to be perpetually harraſſing them, as well in their internal affairs as in their foreign commerce? We muſt root them entirely from all North America, and rid ourſelves for ever of this incumbrance. Nor is the buſineſs likely to reſt here. From ſome late publications we may judge, that the Engliſh have been by degrees irritated

to

to ſuch a pitch, that they are determined to enter on a moſt deſperate conteſt with France, and talk of nothing leſs than totally deſtroying the French naval power and commerce, that they may not be able to diſplay their flag any longer upon the ocean. To ſuch a height is riſen the military and political thermometer. There is therefore every reaſon to expect, that this will be the moſt important and obſtinate war that ever was carried on between the two nations. The one will, no doubt, uſe her utmoſt efforts to preſerve that which it has coſt her in a length of time ſo much labour and induſtry to attain, a flouriſhing commerce, a navy, which ſoon after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle ſuddenly broke forth, and covered the ocean; the other, to remain the ſole arbiter of commerce, and miſtreſs of the ſea, which is her proper empire, and her only means of preſerving in Europe a balance againſt the French power and grandeur by land. We ſhall ſee ſome deciſions made in the other world, which will go a great way towards deciding their affairs in this.

But

But what am I about, to be talking politics before one of the ableſt miniſters in the world, who has merited the eſteem of an Oſterman, been employed by him in the moſt difficult and delicate negociations, and ſigned in Hungary one of the moſt celebrated treaties of peace of the preſent age? Perhaps I may be compared to that ſilly philoſopher, who took it in his head to give a lecture on the art of war in the preſence of Hannibal. No; though removed at ſo great a diſtance, I ſhall amuſe myſelf with the pleaſing recollection of thoſe hours which I frequently paſſed in converſation with you, when riding together in the delightful park at Berlin; hours which I ſhall ever remember with pleaſure.

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LETTER X.

On the Foundation of the War made againſt the King of Pruſſia, by Auſtria, France, Ruſſia, &c.

To Signor FRANCESCO MARIA ZANOTTI,

Secretary to the Bologna Academy.

IT is impoſſible for the weather to be more tempeſtuous or gloomy: the ſky cannot be more completely overcaſt. This is the moſt trying proof, the moſt important criſis, for the houſe of Brandenburg, and the virtue of Frederick. A ſtate ſprung up not long ſince from the claſs of principalities, which in a few years had attained the ſecond rank in Europe, and lately had riſen even to the firſt, now ſees itſelf in danger of being annihilated. France, diſguſted at the King of Pruſſia's alliance with England, at a time when, being at war with the latter, ſhe had reckoned upon her former friendſhip with that monarch, has now joined herſelf to Auſtria, her natural

enemy; and, after two centuries of continued war, has entered into a formal alliance with her; by which ſhe is engaged to furniſh twenty-four thouſand men to aſſiſt the court of Vienna in the recovery of the rich province of Sileſia, and the county of Glatz, the mountains of which, penetrating into Bohemia and Moravia, are a check upon the Empreſs Queen, and, in caſe ſhe ſhould attempt any thing without, give her reaſon to be anxious for the ſecurity of her own dominions. Ruſſia will ſoon join Auſtria and France, if ſhe has not already done it, being an old ally of the former, for ſome time paſt at variance with Pruſſia, and now exceedingly piqued againſt the Engliſh, for withdrawing their ſubſidy of half a million per annum, and preferring, to their ancient friendſhip, a new connexion with Pruſſia. The old as well as the freſh bickerings between the houſe of Brandenburg and that of Saxony, make it evident, that the latter waits but the favourable moment to declare itſelf. Already Sweden, inſtigated by France, from whom ſhe receives a ſubſidy, now having gained a fine opportunity for it, aims

aims at the recovery of Pomerania; and a great part of the Empire, under the auſpices of Auſtria, will unite themſelves againſt the King, like ſo many little dogs about a maſtiff already overpowered and pinned to the ground.

Beſides the twenty-four thouſand men promiſed by France, ſhe will ſend more, if need be, to the aſſiſtance of Auſtria. The Ruſſians have already on the confines of Pruſſia an army of ſeventy thouſand men, heretofore in the pay of England, abundantly furniſhed with ammunition and proviſions, and waiting only the order to march.

The indolent diſpoſition of the Grand Signor, and the low ebb to which the Ottoman empire is reduced, will enable the Empreſs Queen to draw a great part of her forces from Hungary: from Flanders ſhe may draw the whole, and in like manner from Italy; her dominions on that ſide being ſecured by France from any attempts of his Sardinian majeſty. Thus will the houſe of Auſtria be able

to pour its whole force into Sileſia and Brandenburg.

Such are the enemies of the King, the greateſt part of them his next-door neighbours: his only friend is on an iſland, at a conſiderable diſtance from him, engaged in an unſucceſsful war with France, and every moment in apprehenſion of a deſcent from ſome of the immenſe armaments fitting out at Breſt and Rochefort. Beſides which, England is diſtracted with factions, and a great miſunderſtanding ſubſiſts between the miniſtry and the people, becauſe Port-Mahon, the aſylum for their fleets in the Mediterranean, was not ſuccoured; becauſe, by the want of intelligence in their commanders in America, Oſwego, the barrier of New-England, was loſt; and becauſe, inſtead of raiſing a national militia for the defence of the kingdom, they have drawn in a number of Heſſians and Hanoverians, and by thoſe means left defenceleſs the only part of Germany that was favourably inclined to the King of Pruſſia.

How

How will this monarch be able, with territories for the moſt part poor and barren, and, what is more, ſeparated from each other, to make head againſt ſo numerous and powerful a confederacy?

We muſt be candid enough to confeſs, that theſe reflections ſhould make the deepeſt impreſſion on the mind of every one that revolves them; may cauſe apprehenſions in the moſt intrepid, and the moſt accuſtomed to danger. Notwithſtanding, when we ſee the King mounted at the head of his army, we cannot ſuppoſe that he would exhibit ſo much confidence, if he thought his affairs ſo deſperate as they appear to be.

I have ſometimes ventured to imagine within myſelf, what his ideas may be, and what reſolutions he may have formed on the preſent occaſion, as I have been walking under the ſhady vines of Cavallina, ſurrounded by the moſt inveterate enemies of Pruſſia, in verſe and in proſe. I ſhall conceal none of my ſpeculations from you, that you may judge, whether any of them be worthy of a Frederick,

and

and ſufficient to warrant ſo ſudden and univerſal a movement of his army.

Auſtria, ſaid I to myſelf, has certainly for ſome time back, after the example of Pruſſia, increaſed her revenues, by œconomical regulations, by aboliſhing a great number of uſeleſs offices, the ſpunges of the ſtate; by which ſhe has put herſelf in a way of maintaining her armies without the aſſiſtance of any foreign ſubſidies: ſhe is in a far better capacity to ſuſtain a war than in former times, yet her treaſury is not yet ſo well provided as it ſhould be; and the very weight of the ordinary taxes will prevent her from laying, as in former times, any new impoſitions upon her ſubjects.

Who can diſpute the capacity and genius of the Empreſs? Who knows not that ſhe is already as much diſtinguiſhed among women, for the excellencies of her mind, as for the graces of her perſon? having already given, in the flower of her youth, when ſhe firſt mounted the imperial throne, the ſtrongeſt tokens of a manly firmneſs (in ſpite of the deſpond-

ing

ing fears of her old miniſters) and of every female virtue. She certainly treads in the glorious ſteps of Queen Elizabeth: but then ſhe cannot head her own armies; and to put all in the power of a general, to act according to his own diſcretion, would not be ſo ſecure a meaſure. Even an Ariſtides might be tempted to lay aſide his integrity, and to betray his truſt. Again, it will be no leſs inexpedient to tie up a commander's hands in ſuch a manner, as to leave him no power to act without orders from the council of war in the capital: this may prevent him from taking advantage of the moſt favourable opportunities, and of ſtriking a blow in the moſt critical conjuncture.

It will be extremely difficult, methought, for the Empreſs Queen, notwithſtanding her prudence, united to a ſweetneſs of diſpoſition capable of gaining over the moſt obdurate ſpirit, to reconcile the jarring intereſts, and extinguiſh the rivalſhips and animoſities, new and old, among her generals, who will ſacri-

fice

fice to them the intereſt and proſperity of the houſe of Auſtria.

The Auſtrian army is certainly better than it was, on account of the uniformity of diſcipline that has lately been introduced into it: but it would require perhaps thirty years at leaſt of continued exertion, and the ſovereign himſelf to ſhew the example, to bring an army to ſuch a pitch of diſcipline, as to anſwer fully in every circumſtance, at all times, and in every ſituation, the views of the commander; in fine, to be equal to the Pruſſian army. The Auſtrians remember to this day the battles of Molwitz, of Czaſlaw, of Freidburg, of Sorr, and of Keſſeldorff: the Pruſſians, on the contrary, are inſpired with freſh ardour on the recollection of their former victories, and with a contempt for their enemies, which is as ſerviceable in a ſoldier as it might be fatal in a commander.

France is indeed the moſt powerful ſtate in Europe, the induſtry of her inhabitants keeping pace with their number: but ſhe cannot be ſaid to be in the zenith of her proſperity; her revenues being

being in great diſorder, the people diſguſted at contributions raiſed for the laſt war, which contrary to promiſe are ſtill levied, regal authority no longer reſpected as it has been, and a number of factious ſubjects aiming at the reduction of deſpotic power, the very ſoul of military government.

She has already engaged in a moſt expenſive war with the Engliſh, who will find her employment enough in Africa, in Aſia, in Europe, and in America: from the experience of her ill ſucceſs in former wars, ſhe probably will not ſend any large armies into Germany; and if ſhe does ſend them, it will not be with a Saxe or a Lowendahl at the head of them, to whom ſhe was indebted for all her paſt victories.

Ruſſia wants the principal ſinew of war to carry on any operations at a diſtance from her frontiers: and who will provide her with it, eſpecially for any length of time? Beſides, who knows but that the Engliſh, by whoſe traffic ſhe is ſo conſiderable a gainer, may contrive

to detach her from the alliance, or at leaſt to temper her zeal in it? Moreover, the Ruſſian armies are not ſufficiently provided with heavy cavalry to act in the plains of Poland and Pruſſia; neither are they commanded as they were in the reign of Anne Ivanowna.

Saxony is ſo ſituated, excluſively of her own internal force, as to give a paſſage to the King's enemies into the heart of his dominions. He played but an indifferent game in the former war, when, having marched through Saxony, and penetrated into Bohemia, he found the Saxons united with the Auſtrians againſt him at the battle of Strigau. The ſame thing might be done in the preſent: he therefore offered them the alternative, either to enter into a ſtrict alliance with him, and to ſhare the fortune of the war along with him, or elſe to diſband their army, and leave him at liberty to act againſt his enemies. They do not think proper however to accept his propoſals, but rather chuſe to ſhut themſelves up in their ſtrong camp at Pirna, where they are ſo cloſely beſieged

ſieged by the King, that they can neither get proviſion nor ammunition of any kind. There was nothing left for him but to make a ſudden irruption into Saxony, in order to prevent them from invading his own dominions. This is in fact what he has done; nor could he act otherwiſe, from a principle of ſelf-defence; a conſideration that all others muſt give way to.

The Swedes, a people neither numerous nor rich, are not much to be dreaded; and, as they have lately demonſtrated, are no longer the heroes they were in the time of Charles the Twelfth. The King has, moreover, a ſiſter on the throne of Sweden, a Princeſs adorned with every quality to render her amiable in the eyes of the world, and with a capacity to manage the moſt difficult enterpriſe. She has a tender regard for the King, her brother.

Laſtly, nothing is to be apprehended from the tumultuous bodies that may be aſſembled in the different circles of the Empire, in ſupport of the houſe of

Auſtria. They are not yet levied, and, when levied, will be quite unfit for every purpoſe of war. As to the *bans* which will accompany theſe armies, we may pay the ſame reſpect to them as wiſe men do to incantations.

Alliances, though they may laſt for a ſhort time, ſoon tend to diſcord and diſſolution: beſides, the alliance between France and Auſtria is ſo unnatural, that it muſt infallibly alarm the Empire, the conſtitution of which was founded in Oſnabrug, on the oppoſition of thoſe two houſes. The union of two ſuch powerful catholic princes muſt give much ſuſpicion and jealouſy to the Proteſtants. Thoſe names, always dear to mankind, of Country, Religion, Liberty, may perhaps be thrown out to ſome advantage, and may produce wonderful effects, if countenanced by the diſplay of a victorious banner.

For a ſimilar reaſon, the Hollanders may perhaps be rouſed one day or other; and ſome northern crown ſnatched from its dependence on the court of France.

With

With regard to England, which is the principal figure in the picture, there can ſcarcely be a doubt, but that the influence, which the crown has always had in parliament, will ſo far prevail, as to have an Engliſh army ſent upon the continent; a meaſure which the nation is at preſent much averſe to. What the King has moſt at heart, is certainly his electorate of Hanover: this is the compaſs that has uniformly guided the wars of England, ſince the elevation of the houſe of Brunſwick to the crown of that kingdom; and the preſervation of this electorate will ſtill continue to be the ruling principle. For the reſt, there is as much diſſatisfaction in London againſt the Auſtrians, as there is hatred againſt the French: after the profuſion of ſo much blood and treaſure in the ſupport of Auſtria, ſince the beginning of the preſent century, the Engliſh are extremely irritated to find her ſo cloſely united with the ſworn and inveterate enemy of Britain.

The ſpirit of party has got to too great a height among the Engliſh, to leave

leave a poſſibility for it to laſt much longer. In extreme dangers all particular animoſities muſt be laid aſide; the miniſter and the people muſt make a common cauſe, and unite together in ſtrenuouſly forwarding thoſe meaſures which are requiſite for the ſecurity, as well as the dignity, of the ſtate. Their parliamentary rancour once ſubſided, it is probable that the Engliſh will unite themſelves more cloſely than ever with their new ally, the King of Pruſſia. This monarch is nearly related to the Royal Family of England, and has by this time got the better of all the reſentment he might formerly have borne againſt his uncle. His valour and military ardour ſhould by degrees warm and captivate the Engliſh; for we are naturally diſpoſed to admire thoſe virtues that are congenial to our own: and it is to be hoped, that in time he will reap the fruit of that political enthuſiaſm, which he himſelf may be the means of inſpiring into the nation.

The Princes allied againſt Pruſſia, are, to be ſure, the moſt powerful in Europe; ſo

ſo that this confederacy may be called a ſecond League of Cambray. I know not, however, whether this very circumſtance may not render the confederacy the weaker, no one being powerful enough to influence the others, and to make them draw together to one uniform end.

Leagues turn out generally to little effect, when one is able to reſiſt their firſt efforts, and particularly when their firſt deſigns are prevented, and their ſchemes confounded in the beginning, by a fortunate ſtroke.

Who ever had a better right to form ſuch expectations than Frederick; having nothing to prevent him from acting himſelf at the head of his army; with a full treaſury, a country long ſince prepared for war, protected by fortreſſes well ſupplied with all manner of ſtores, with three fine armies of fifty thouſand each, which might be recruited by their own victories in different parts of Germany and Poland? And if his forces ſhould be inferior in number to thoſe of his

his enemies, every thing may be hoped from the ſuperior diſcipline of his army, and from their affection for his perſon, whom they conſider not only as their general, but as their father; to whom peace has been a continual preparation for war.

The ſkill and valour of the generals who ſerve under him, ſhould further encourage him to undertake the moſt difficult attempt: Levald, left to defend Pruſſia, a man who has grown grey in arms, and who has in former wars, and particularly at Trautenau, ſhewn no doubtful marks of valour; Schwerin, appointed to command the army deſtined for the defence of Sileſia, an officer no leſs remarkable for courage than for conduct, who ſtruck the firſt blow againſt the Auſtrians at Molwitz, and laid the foundation of the Pruſſian grandeur. Thoſe he has with him are his own brothers, who learnt from him to join the ſtudies of Athens to thoſe of Sparta; his couſin Charles the Margrave, a worthy grandſon of William the Great; Maurice of Anhalt, heir to the military virtues of his

his father; Ferdinand of Brunſwick and Charles of Bevern, who already walk in the ſteps of their forefathers, the firſt of whom contributed vaſtly, in the late war, to the victory at Sorr; Winterfeldt, full of ſagacity and courage, of gallantry and generoſity, the idol of the ſoldiers; and Keith, who has already ſhewn himſelf in the Ruſſian army equal to Lowendahl, and much ſuperior to him in knowledge and wiſdom in council. But the life and ſoul of all is Frederick, who in his youth, when ſuppoſed to dedicate all his time to the Muſes, gave no leſs attention to the affairs of war and politics; who never raiſed a ſiege, or loſt a battle.

Why not look for brilliant actions, in the preſent age, to vie with thoſe of Themiſtocles or Epaminondas? If any can be expected to emulate them in their victories, it muſt ſurely be thoſe who have imitated them in their ſtudies, their exerciſes, and their virtues.

At any rate, there can be no great atchievement, unaccompanied by great danger; and daring is by wiſe men judged

prudent, when neceſſity requires it. The longer we ſtand ſtill, the greater the danger becomes, and the nearer it approaches us: by acting with vigour, we may perhaps overcome it, and turn our loſs into advantage: at the worſt, it is only truſting to Fortune, who commonly bends to thoſe that make a bold attack upon her, not to thoſe that approach her with a timid caution.

Such was my council of war, in which I have been bold enough to endeavour to penetrate into the ſoul of Frederick. How I have ſucceeded, it is you who are to determine. Meanwhile we ſhall continue to obſerve,

Incertos bellorum exitus, Martemque communem.

LET-

LETTER XI.

On the Effects of the Battle of Lobositz.

To Count BONOMO ALGAROTTI.

YOU may reſt aſſured, my dear brother, that the King of Pruſſia would gladly loſe not only one battle of Loboſitz, ſince they will have it that he loſt it, but ten more, provided they were to be attended by the ſame effects. And who would not give up a few miles of country, a few thouſand men, which is commonly the loſs of the party worſted in an action, in exchange for a province like Saxony, with three millions of inhabitants, and an annual revenue of ſix millions of crowns; a province that contains the mines of Freidburg, ſcarcely inferior to thoſe of Mexico and Peru; which, with its noble manufactories of wool and linen, and the fair of Leipſick, to which one half of Europe reſorts, draws in no ſmall quantity of foreign coin, to enable the

court and the miniſters to diſplay the magnificence of a Lucullus?

Who would not be glad to leave a few thouſand ſoldiers on the field of battle, to have in exchange an army of twenty thouſand men priſoners of war, with two hundred pieces of cannon, without ſtriking a blow, nay, almoſt without drawing the ſword? In this manner Julius Cæſar captured in Spain the army of Afranius and Petreius: and it appears that this conſummate general, by what he ſays in his Commentaries, was exceedingly anxious to gain the victory without bloodſhed, and to overcome his enemy rather by prudence than by force. "*Cæſar in* "*eam ſpem venerat, ſe ſine pugna, et ſine* "*vulnere ſuorum rem conficere poſſe, quod* "*re frumentaria adverſarios intercluſiſſet.* "*Cur etiam ſecundo prælio aliquos ex ſuis* "*amitteret? cur vulnerari pateretur optime* "*meritos de ſe milites? cur denique for-*"*tunam periclitaretur? præſertim cum non* "*minus eſſet imperatoris conſilio ſuperare* "*quam gladio?*"

What

What is of infinite importance to the King is, that Saxony being reduced, his rear is free, and the whole courſe of the Elbe open: with a freſh ſupply of men, money, and proviſions, he may carry the war at his own diſcretion into Bohemia.

The profit which the King has drawn from Saxony is incredible; much greater than its own maſters derived from it. There was an infinity of abuſes and diſorders, that had long ſince crept into every department of the ſtate. The King, having introduced his own methodical and œconomical form of government, has reſtored all the diſeaſed members to their proper vigour. Having placed at Torgau the director general of the crown revenues, he has regulated the contributions of the country, aſſigning a due portion towards maintaining that part of the royal family which remains at Dreſden, and the remainder to the ſervices of the war. He gives every countenance to commerce that the times will allow, and has cauſed a great quantity of grain to be diſtributed among the Saxon peaſants, that the next year may produce a plentiful

tiful harveſt: he has beſides permitted them to deſtroy a vaſt number of ſtags, fallow deer, and boars, which were reſerved for the pleaſures of the royal hunt, and which, every one being forbid to meddle with them under the ſevereſt penalties, wandered about at their pleaſure, and did ſo much miſchief throughout the country, that the people, to get rid of them, offered to add another million of crowns to the ordinary revenue.

To the wiſdom of theſe ſalutary regulations, his Majeſty adds the moſt gracious affability, and an obſervance of military diſcipline equal with that of the Spartan or Roman republic. Every perſon may have a free and immediate acceſs to his perſon. They tell, amongſt other inſtances, that certain of his officers having occupied the beſt part of a burgher's houſe, and the latter making his complaint to him, he immediately ordered the officers into his preſence, and told them, that he brought them into Saxony to make war upon his enemies, not upon the burghers. Theſe matters remind

remind the Saxons of his conduct laſt war, when he preſerved Dreſden from the ferocity of the old Prince of Anhalt, who had promiſed the pillage of that place to his ſoldiers, as a recompence for their good behaviour at Keſſeldorff. Thus he endeavours to mitigate the unavoidable miſeries of war, and to ſoothe the grief of the Saxons, at ſeeing nothing but the face of Mars, inſtead of the magnificent ſights of the Carnival, their ſuperb theatres and galleries converted into barracks, or ſet apart for military exerciſes.

About the middle of February laſt, the forces of Brandenbourg amounted (who would believe it?) to two hundred and twelve thouſand men; a greater army than ever the Romans had, even in the times of Trajan or Auguſtus.

George-William, elector of Brandenbourg, had no more than eight thouſand new levies, when he was obliged to receive Guſtavus Adolphus into the palace of Berlin, at the head of a thouſand infantry, with four pieces of cannon.

The

The great Elector increaſed his forces to twenty-five thouſand men, and put them upon a regular footing: at the head of theſe he made no contemptible figure, at a time when great atchievements were performed with little armies. Frederick his ſon, who firſt aſſumed the dignity of the crown, was more intent on adding to the ſplendour of his court than to the ſtrength of his army. He continued, during his reign, to be ſubſidiſed by England in favour of Auſtria; and his troops had a conſiderable ſhare in the victories of Hochſtet and Turin, under the old Prince of Anhalt. William, the father of the preſent King, judging that the ſtrength of his army would be more effectual than the magnificence of his court, towards ſupporting his dignity in the empire, got together as far as eighty thouſand; parſimonious in every other particular, prodigal in this. He ſeemed however to keep them rather for ſhew than uſe, and never employed them in diſturbing the peace of Europe. Frederick the Second, who was thought to be entirely given up to the pleaſures of ſtudy and retirement, made a ſtill further augmentation of their

number,

number, and perfected their diſcipline. He ſoon furniſhed them employment too in the conqueſt of Sileſia, and found himſelf at the head of a hundred and fifty thouſand men, accuſtomed to conquer, well diſciplined, and ready to move at his nod, in a capacity to protect his own dominions, and to ſecure an ally, when neceſſity required it.

After his ſucceſſes at Lobofitz and Pirna, his principal care was, partly by incorporating the priſoners with his own ſoldiers, and partly by raiſing others in all parts of Saxony, and of the Empire, to increaſe their number beyond what was ever known ſince men have warred againſt each other; that is to ſay, ſince the beginning of the world. And though his enemies gave out, that he could find but little ſervice in ſuch troops, gathered from the dregs of every nation, and every religion, without attachment to country, or any other principle to prevent them from deſerting; that the ſecret of Hannibal was long ſince forgotten, of converting a parcel of ſtrangers, collected from different quarters, into an hoſt to be

depended upon; the King has given them a proof to the contrary, and has ſo contrived to inſpire the ſame ſpirit, the ſame ſoul, into the whole body of his ſoldiers, that they have neither knowledge, ſenſation, nor exiſtence, but through their commander. Of this a ſoldier, who was mortally wounded at the battle of Loboſitz, furniſhed a ſtriking inſtance: in the agonies of death, he aſked if the King was ſafe, and how the day went? Being informed that the King was well, and had won the battle, "Now," ſaid he, "it is a pleaſure to "die."

Nevertheleſs, it muſt be acknowledged, that the victory at Loboſitz was bravely diſputed by Brown, an officer of great activity, fertile in expedients, wiſe in the planning of any enterpriſe, and prompt in the execution of it. If I were to compare him with any of the ancients, I ſhould place him by the ſide of Veſpaſian or Marcellus. He deſerves the favour he enjoys at the court of Vienna, and is worthy the honour of being the opponent of the King of Pruſſia.

His

His retreat, in order to gain the camp of Baden, is conſidered as an admirable manœuvre. But what did him infinitely more credit was, the march he undertook, ſix days after the battle of Loboſitz, towards Saxony, in order to liberate the King of Poland and his army from the hands of the Pruſſians. His attempt at Loboſitz proving abortive, he ſent advice of it privately to Roſtowſki, a natural brother of the King's, who commanded the Saxon troops at Pirna; an experienced officer, who had ſerved againſt the Turks in Hungary, and commanded the ſame Saxons at the battle of Keſſeldorff, and who was wanting rather in opportunity than in valour. Brown ſo concerted matters with him, that on the twelfth of October he was to be with a body of choice troops at Schandaw, a large village of Saxony, on the right of the Elbe, to which Roſtowſki was alſo to march the Saxon army: they were then to attack the enemy on each flank, and having put him to the rout, were to march together to the camp of Baden, where, according to circumſtances, they

might purſue meaſures for their mutual advantage.

Leaving Luccheſi, a man of romantic valour, who had ſignaliſed himſelf at Placenza, to command the camp at Baden, Brown picked out eight thouſand infantry, and two thouſand horſe, with which he paſſed the Elbe at Raudnitz, a little way behind the camp. Some ſmall bodies of light cavalry being poſted in different parts along the Elbe, to prevent the Pruſſians, who held Terchin on the right of that river, from getting ſcent of his march, he took a long circuit to Boeſmich-Lippa, and to Kamnitz; and towards the evening of the eleventh, arrived oppoſite Schandaw, in the confines of Saxony. The Saxons were that night to paſs the river, and to be the next morning before Schandaw in order of battle; but, as all Europe knows, they never ſtirred a foot. Brown waited for them two days, but in vain; ſo, at laſt, he thought it time to retire, in order to regain his camp at Baden. On this occaſion, ſome were not wanting to obſerve,

obſerve, in alluſion to his attempt at Velletri, that, whether Brown endeavoured to take or to liberate a King, he was equally ſucceſsful.

LETTER XII.

On the Military and Political Conduct of PITT, *the Engliſh Miniſter.*

To Signor FRANCESCO MARIA ZANOTTI,
Secretary to the Bologna Academy.

ON my arrival here, two pieces of bad news: the Ruſſians in Berlin, and you at Vedrana. I flatter myſelf however with the hopes, that they will ſoon quit that capital, and that you will quickly return to Bologna. The King, having left a large detachment under Schweritz to oppoſe Daun, marches with the rapidity of a Cæſar to cut them off from the paſſage of the Oder:

L'audace des héros opère des miracles,

as he ſays himſelf in his Poem on the Art of War: it will carry its operations ſtill further; to the recovery of Berlin, which is but juſt loſt. Nor will he ſtop here: he, doubtleſs, has an eye upon Saxony; but whether he will conquer it again, or not, before the concluſion of the campaign, it is hard to ſay: I am ſure he has it ſo much at heart, that he will at leaſt omit no means of attempting it.

Meanwhile the young Germanicus thunders on the Lower Rhine; and, having taken Cleves and Ruremond, with the enemies magazines, is now giving Weſel a drubbing. No enterpriſe was ever conducted with greater ſecrecy than his march; the enemies had not the ſmalleſt ſcent of it, until they got the ſcent of his gunpowder. He follows rapidly the ſteps of his great uncles, and obſerves cloſely that maxim of his uncle by the mother's ſide,

Que le foudre en ſecret enfermé dans les airs
Sur l'ennemi ſurpris tombe avec les éclairs.

Have you been informed of the news from America? The French have been ſur-

ſurrounded at Montreal, and obliged to ſurrender; ſo they may take their farewell of the New World. The Engliſh are now maſters of that immenſe tract of country included in Canada and Louiſiana, from the Gulf of St. Laurence to that of Mexico: and now the extent of their colonies there merits that title, which before had too pompous an appearance in the maps, THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

Who ever would have ſuppoſed, that thoſe Iroquois, as we may call them, ſeparated from the reſt of the world, whom Julius Cæſar diſcovered, and Agricola deigned to conquer, whoſe faces were in antient times exhibited as a ſpectacle of deriſion, and they employed in the moſt ſervile offices,—that theſe *Ultimi Orbis*, as Horace terms them, ſhould one day become the firſt, what the Romans were, amongſt other nations? — that thoſe, who formerly were unacquainted with the moſt ſimple branches of huſbandry, and lived entirely upon milk and fleſh, ſhould now become ſo many Serrani, their iſland the Egypt of France, of Spain,

Spain, and Portugal? Who could have imagined, that a people terrified at the ſight of the Italian veſſels, and afterwards ſo much delighted with a galley laden with ſauſages and muſk wine, which Julius the Second ſent, in order to incite them to take arms againſt France, ſhould in the iſſue tranſport to all parts of the world the riches of the Indies, and their own, and cover the ſea with their ſhips of war? They have done wonders under Cromwell, and Marlborough, ſince the times of Elizabeth, who was truly the foundreſs of the Engliſh grandeur: all this, however, was but a prelude to what was to be done in our days, under the conduct of a PITT. I myſelf ſaw this luminary of the age riſe and expand itſelf in the moſt turbulent times that England ever experienced, while the oppoſition againſt Sir Robert Walpole was in its higheſt fury. Being a ſoldier, as well as an orator, the miniſter took from him his commiſſion of Cornet in a regiment of dragoons, for having ſpoken his mind too freely in Parliament. As inacceſſible to bribes as a Fabricius or a Curius, ſober, indefatigable, firm in his deſigns, vigorous

vigorous in executing them, nervous in his language, attentive to no other object but the glory of his nation, which he conſiders as his own, he has arrived by honourable means to that degree of greatneſs, which is ſeldom attained without mean intrigues, and artifices at court.

He is not much given to *fineſſe* in his political negociations: with a heart full of zeal for the public good, and a mind firmly directed towards it, he attends only to eſſentials, and follows the conciſe and concluſive method of the Romans.

When called to the helm of ſtate, he found the treaty with Pruſſia already formed. His firſt public act was to ſend back the Heſſians and Hanoverians, and to raiſe in their room a national militia for the defence of the kingdom.

What will appear aſtoniſhing to thoſe unacquainted with the affairs of England, and what appeared even there very ſingular, is, that though the King's mini-

ſter, he acted in oppoſition to the deſigns and inclination of the King.

The Duke of Cumberland had paſſed over from London into Germany, in the month of April, to the defence of Hanover, againſt a large army of French, that was marching towards it; but he had paſſed over without a Britiſh army, which he was extremely deſirous of, as well as the King his father, who, as it is natural to ſuppoſe, held his electorate more at heart than any other part of his dominions. It was deliberated in the council, whether a large reinforcement of Engliſh troops ſhould be ſent over to the Duke, who preſſed the meaſure ſtrongly, and pointed out the urgent neceſſity of it. After a long debate in the council, many having ſpoken for and againſt it, Mr. Pitt's opinion weighed down the reſt. He warmly maintained, "That England ſhould not deprive herſelf of her national forces, in order to ſupport foreign intereſts, in which ſhe was not in the ſmalleſt degree concerned. That it would be abſurd and impolitic to ſend them to diſtinguiſh themſelves upon the continent, and to

gain glory for their country there; while ſhe was left to languiſh under the preſſure of internal wounds, and to endure evils which would bring her to the very brink of deſtruction. That from this ſource have flowed all our paſt misfortunes. What effect have the victories of Marlborough produced, but an accumulation of the public debt? By having in the laſt war entered more than was fitting into the affairs of the continent, we were obliged to cede Cape Breton, the only reward we could have conſoled ourſelves with for ſuch a profuſion of treaſure, which would have bridled the French power in America, and which has ſince enabled them, as often as they thought proper, to over-run that continent. That ſubſidiſing foreign Princes muſt in the end exhauſt the riches of the nation: beſides, that the inutility of theſe ſubſidies was evident from the recent inſtances of Bavaria and Saxony, which the ſubſidies had retained in our intereſt in time of peace; but on the breaking out of war, when their aſſiſtance was the moſt required, could not prevent them from joining our enemies. That Eng-

land ſhould not embroil herſelf in the affairs of the continent but on the greateſt emergency; as in the Roman armies the Triarii did not enter into action till every other reſource had failed. That ſhe was like an amphibious animal, which might live upon land, yet whoſe proper element is the water. That the real ſtrength of a ſtate lies in that from which it derives its ſubſiſtence. That England ſubſiſts by her trade, and by the naval armaments which protect her trade. That America, on whoſe account ſhe had entered into the war with France, was her ſeminary of ſeamen; the promiſed land, the Eden of England. Thence ſhe ſupplies the neighbouring nations with fiſh, with tobacco, with rice, with indigo: thence ſhe may draw all her naval ſtores. That the command of the ſea would give her the dominion of the land: in fine, that the councils of England ſhould reſemble thoſe of Athens, when under the direction of Themiſtocles."

The council was brought over by this harangue; but the King was ſo much enraged, as to demand the ſeals from Pitt,

Pitt, and to diſmiſs him from his ſervice. The novelty of the affair made an extraordinary noiſe in London; and if ever Pitt's houſe was full, it was the day after his reſignation; when he was attended by a crowd of people, who with the loudeſt acclamations hailed him the ſincere Patriot, and Miniſter of the People. The City of London ſent deputies to thank him in the moſt ſolemn manner for the zeal he had ſhewn whilſt in office for the public good, and to preſent him with the freedom of the city in a handſome box of gold: an example that was followed by half the kingdom. For ſeveral weeks freſh deputies, with the freedom of their reſpective towns, were continually pouring on him, ſome from one county, and ſome from another: his houſe was perpetually reſounding with acclamations of applauſe, and was conſtantly filling with new viſitors and ambaſſadors. There never was a triumph more glorious than this exile; he might indeed be rather ſuppoſed to have retired of his own accord, than to have been diſmiſſed from his office.

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Meanwhile the cabinet at St. James's was in the utmoſt confuſion and diſorder: ſo that the King was obliged to recall Pitt, towards the concluſion of June in the ſame year, and to re-eſtabliſh him in his office. He would not however conſent to reſume the reins of government, without the principal offices of the ſtate being conferred on perſons poſſeſſed of zeal for the public welfare, and in whom he himſelf could place confidence.

His intention was not to ſend any troops to Hanover, ſtill perſiſting in his former ideas; but to carry on a maritime and predatory war upon the coaſts of France, in order to divert the force of the French, and to prevent them from detaching into Germany. But it was urged in the cabinet, by thoſe who were attached to the court, that affairs had now proceeded to too great a length for ſuch weak and undeciſive meaſures, ſince the fatal action at Haſtembeck; that the French having the whole Electorate at their diſpoſal, and the Duke's army being reduced to neutrality and

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diſperſed, it became neceſſary not to truſt to the effects of harraſſing the coaſt, but to make a vigorous attack upon the heart of the enemy.

In the mean time, the French army having been routed by the King of Pruſſia, when it was leaſt expected, at the memorable battle of Roſbach, and in a month after, the Auſtrians at the ſtill more memorable battle of Liſſa, which was followed by the taking of Breſlaw, the Engliſh began to talk of nothing but the King of Pruſſia's victories. It was a ſcandal, ſaid they, to leave at the mercy of Fortune a hero, who ſhould be conſidered as the champion of the Proteſtant cauſe in Germany, and the only Prince on the continent worthy of the alliance of England, in oppoſition to France. His portrait was every where to be ſeen, and was the admiration of all deſcriptions of perſons. His birth-day was kept through the whole iſland with as much rejoicing, as if at Roſbach he had ſaved England from the invaſion of the French. The King took the advantage of this public enthuſiaſm to bring

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once more upon the carpet the propoſition of ſending an army, or at leaſt a large body of Engliſh troops, to the continent.

The connexion between England and Pruſſia became cloſer than ever. By means of Engliſh gold they thought of reſtoring the emaciated army of Cumberland. The King of Pruſſia inſpired a new life into it, by appointing for its commander Ferdinand of Brunſwick, who had lately given freſh proofs of his valour at Prague, in which victory he had a very conſiderable ſhare; and who, in concert with the King, afterwards performed ſuch great exploits, as will carry his name to the lateſt poſterity.

The next year large reinforcements of Engliſh troops were ſent to Germany; the famous treaty of ſubſidy with Pruſſia was concluded: then it was that Pitt conceived the idea of conquering America in Germany, conſtrained, as he himſelf has ſince acknowledged, by the neceſſity which Engliſh miniſters will ever

ever be under, whilſt the King of Great-Britain is Elector of Hanover.

Notwithſtanding Pitt ſent troops to the Electorate, Engliſh armaments appeared every day upon the coaſts of France. One would imagine that under him the number of the people was multiplied. He inſpired into all the noble thirſt of conqueſt and of glory: that rooted animoſity, which has always ſubſiſted between the ſailors and the ſoldiers, between the commanders by ſea and thoſe by land, he found means to convert into a laudable emulation, which ſhould moſt effectually ſerve their country.

The whole body of the people repoſe an unlimited confidence in this Miniſter; and he has contrived to unite all parties, and to baniſh diſcord from their Parliament, hitherto a ſcene of perpetual diſſenſion. He requires fifteen, ſixteen, ſeventeen millions: it is immediately granted to him, and with reaſon; for he makes as good uſe of it as Prince Eugene did of the Engliſh money before Turin.

You know how he wrote from the French camp, which he had ſtormed, to thoſe merchants who had advanced the ſums neceſſary for the campaign: "I have received your money, and I hope that I have employed it to your ſatisfaction." Pitt may ſay the very ſame thing. The war on the continent coſts England ſix millions ſterling *per annum*; an immenſe ſum! But it coſts France full as much; with this difference, that her trade being cut off, ſhe has not wherewithal to ſupply ſo great an expence; and has been obliged to take all her plate to the mint: on the other hand, it does not fall ſo heavy on England, on account of the new ſources of riches which flow in upon her from the freſh channels of trade, which her victories are continually opening to her.

Pitt ſketches all the outlines of the different operations, though he does not perhaps finiſh the picture. He chuſes however perſons whom he knows to be equal to the taſk. He gives ſcope to the abilities of an Anſon, a Hawke, a Boſcawen, a Saunders, a Granby, a Wolf, a Mur-

a Murray, and an Amherſt; and does not ſuffer them to remain inactive or unemployed. It is to him that England is indebted for that fine illumination which was exhibited laſt year in a certain houſe in London, in which every quarter of the globe had its particular window decorated with an inſcription: the taking of Goree and Senegal for Africa; that of Surat for Aſia; the victories at Minden, Cadiz, and Quiberon, for Europe; the conqueſt of Cape Breton, of Quebec, &c. &c. &c. for America; an illumination that the Romans never could have made, for want of a window. This year ſome Engliſhman may perhaps merit the title of AMERICANUS, as Pitt has, ſince he firſt became Miniſter, that of RESTITUTOR BRITANNIÆ.

Such a man as this, a Demoſthenes in the Parliament, an Epaminondas, a Themiſtocles, in the council of war, is worthy of co-operating with a Frederick. What the effect will be of their joint operations, after ſuch great things atchieved ſeparately, we ſhall ſoon have an opportunity of obſerving. My firſt wiſh

at preſent is to have the pleaſure of ſeeing you, and of converſing with you, at diſtance from the vulgar croud, of actions, which will have ſo brilliant an appearance in the annals of the preſent age.

As a friend of virtue, and a votary of the Muſes, let me perſuade you to ſtrike your lyre in honour of Pitt. If you think proper to take him for a ſubject, you will produce verſes not inferior to thoſe you compoſed in praiſe of Frederick, which even the moſt obſtinate partiſans of Auſtria admired ſo much as to get them by heart.

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LETTER XIII.

On the Affair of Maxen.

To Count BONOMO ALGAROTTI.

AN event, which may appear of trifling conſequence in your eyes, and in thoſe of the well-informed, is frequently of the utmoſt importance in the opinion of the vulgar. The common people always run into extremes: with them every throw is a ſix or an ace. You may remember how, after the victory of Prague, when the King of Pruſſia marched to give battle to Daun, in whom all the hopes of Auſtria were centered, every one extolled to the ſkies his prudence and diſcernment. Having baffled the Auſtrians, he contrived, with the celerity of a Cæſar, to bring to the iſſue of a ſingle action the fortune of ſo dreadful a war, before the Ruſſians were ready, or the French far advanced in Germany. His talents as a commander,

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the diſcipline of his army, his paſt ſucceſſes, every thing, in ſhort, ſeemed to conſpire in giving him the beſt founded hopes of victory. As ſoon as he had conquered Daun, he would have taken at Prague the army of the Prince of Lorrain, as he did the Saxon army at Pirna; this would have done entirely for the Auſtrians. Part of his army he would have detached to Vienna; and who was in a capacity to diſpute the paſſage? With the remainder he would have marched into the heart of the empire, where the wiſhes of the Proteſtants eagerly awaited him: and how gladly would they not have enliſted under his victorious banner! Sending an orderly ſerjeant to Ratiſbon, to cauſe the Diet to revoke all their decrees againſt him, he would next have turned his arms againſt the French; who, moſt probably, would not have waited his attack on their flank, whilſt they had the Hanoverians to oppoſe in front. The French driven out of Germany, he would have approached the borders of Holland, with an army of a hundred thouſand men; and, rouſing her from her lethargy, would have obliged

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the different parties, with which ſhe was diſtracted, to unite themſelves, whether they would or not, into one common cauſe for the freedom of their country. Thence directing the courſe of the war in Flanders, more terrible and more rapid than in the times of the Prince of Orange, or even of Marlborough, he would have repaired the loſſes which the Engliſh had met with in the Mediterranean, and in America; and finally, Brandenbourg would have had the glory of giving peace, and preſcribing law, to Europe.

The King having loſt the day at Cotmeſitz, the tables were turned, and people began to alter their tone of language. Inſtead of preſcribing the terms of peace to Auſtria, he muſt now, ſaid they, receive them at her diſcretion. That the eighteenth of the month was marked in the heavens from its dawn, as the fatal day that was to decide his deſtiny. What imprudence to lay his whole ſtake upon the event of a ſingle engagement! Let it be granted, that his army is the beſt diſciplined and the beſt

beſt officered in the world; yet who is not aware of the prodigious ſhare Fortune has in the affairs of war? That the French would cloſe in upon him on one ſide, and the Ruſſians on the other; that he would be abandoned by thoſe who had appeared ready to riſe for him in the empire, and that the decrees of the Diet at Ratiſbon would reſume freſh vigour. The forces of the empire too, being collected together, would act in concert with the Auſtrians, the French, the Ruſſians, and the Swedes, who began already to put themſelves in motion, as guarantees of the peace of Weſtphalia, broken, as they ſaid, by the King of Pruſſia; that his dominions would be over-run by fire and ſword, and that no part would be ſaved from the general deſtruction, except ſuch as Auſtria might think proper to retain for herſelf, or for her friends, who had ſuffered ſo much on her account. That he had no reſource left now, that his army, which had been invincible, as it were, by a charm, was routed. Though he had entered into Bohemia like Eugene, he would not be able to make his retreat like Staremburg; and

that

that he, who had invaded the country as a conqueror, would ſcarcely find means to make his eſcape out of it as a fugitive: that the fatal action of the eighteenth inſtant was deciſive of that important quarrel, which muſt neceſſarily have happened, ſooner or later, between the houſe of Auſtria and that of Brandenburg; of which the one, animated by her recent victories, with unimpaired revenues, and a powerful army, could not ſuffer a ſuperior in Germany; the other, reflecting on her ancient grandeur, and the ſplendour of her titles, could not bear the idea of an equal.

So different were the opinions of the world before and after that event. The ſame thing has again happened, now that Finck is taken priſoner at the head of twenty thouſand men. The very perſons who now cry out againſt that enterpriſe, as raſh and inconſiderate, would have been the firſt to extol it, had it ſucceeded fortunately: till the iſſue was known, they ſuſpended their judgment, and waited in anxious expectation of the event.

There is not a perſon of common ſenſe but muſt ſuppoſe that a commander, who in the ſpring of 1757, made ſo glorious an entry in four columns into Bohemia, ſurpriſing the Auſtrians on every ſide; who routed them in their very camp at Prague, the ſtrongeſt encampment perhaps that ever was occupied by an army; who, when reduced to the laſt extremity, beat the French at Roſbach, and a few weeks after, the Auſtrians at Liſſa; a battle of equal, if not of greater, importance in its conſequences than thoſe of Hochſtet, Ramillies, and Turin; and who has beſides atchieved ſo many other glorious exploits in the preſent war; will not any perſon of common ſenſe, I ſay, conclude, that ſuch a commander would not have ſent Finck to take poſt at Maxen, unleſs with ſome great object in view, and that with at leaſt a probability of ſucceſs? Nor will it be a difficult matter to gueſs what this deſign was. Not being able to force Daun out of his ſtrong camp at Plawen, and bring him to an action, which would decide the fate of Dreſden, he detached Finck in his rear, either to oblige him to diſlodge from

from his ſtrong poſt, by cutting off his ſupply of proviſions from Bohemia; or, what is more likely, to fall upon the rear of his army, while the King attacked him in front, by which they would in all probability have routed him, and driven him into the Elbe. But, ſay they, was the detaching twenty thouſand men at a diſtance from any ſupport, and without any communication with the main body, conformable to the rules of war? To this I anſwer, that twenty thouſand men, with a good train of artillery, and well ſupplied with ammunition and proviſions, which the Pruſſians are generally careful to ſecure, having entrenched themſelves in a ſtrong poſition, with a reſolute commander at their head, might defy the efforts of ſixty thouſand, or more, and hold out againſt them.

A ſimilar manœuvre, perhaps ſtill more hazardous, and with the ſame deſign, was practiſed by Mark Anthony, at Philippi, againſt Brutus and Caſſius. Theſe laſt were encamped on two eminences, at the foot of which a little river took its

courſe: in front was a ſpacious plain, and in the rear a marſh, which extended itſelf to the ſea, with ſome foreſts near at hand, whence they ſupplied themſelves with wood: the city of Philippi commanded the plain, from an eminence on one ſide of it. On the iſle of Taxos, at a ſmall diſtance, was their magazine of proviſions, ſupplied by a naval armament, which gave them the command of the ſea. The camp of Anthony and Octavius was in the lower part of the plain; which the autumnal rains, beginning to fall, rendered moiſt and unhealthy. They found extreme difficulty in procuring wood, and were obliged to ſink wells for water. Their proviſions they drew from Amphipolis, above thirty miles diſtant; having only Macedon and Theſſaly to ſupply them, on account of the enemy's holding poſſeſſion of the ſea of Durazzo, which prevented them from drawing any from Italy. The only advantage they had over their enemy, was the excellence of their troops, the greateſt part of whom ſerved under Julius Cæſar: whereas the legions of Brutus and Caſſius had been chiefly recruited in

Aſia,

Aſia, were incomplete, and in no reſpect whatever to be put in competition with thoſe of the Cæſars.

The game which one of the parties had to play, was to ſpin out the campaign, and let the enemy waſte away without coming to action; that of the other, to haſten it as much as poſſible, and to ſeize the firſt occaſion of availing themſelves of their ſuperiority. With this view the Triumvirs preſented themſelves every day in order of battle before the camp of Brutus and Caſſius, and amuſed them conſtantly with the ſhew of an attack, while Mark Anthony detached a few cohorts to the marſh, which was behind the enemy's camp, with orders to make it firm and practicable in certain parts, and to conſtruct ſome forts, and place guards within them, in order to cut off the communication between their encampment and the ſea. They accordingly ſet to work, filling the marſh in ſome places with gravel, and in others, where it was deeper, throwing bridges over it; and, with a degree of expedition peculiar to the Romans, got over every

every difficulty in about ten days. The work was completed before Caſſius, who had no apprehenſion on that ſide, had the leaſt intimation of it; his attention having been entirely taken up in watching the motions of the Triumvirs in front of the camp: beſides, the cohorts employed on this ſervice were covered by a lofty grove of cane-trees, which grew between them and the camp of Caſſius.

This is what Appian relates; and he aſſerts, that this bold operation of Mark Anthony's, was one of the principal cauſes of the two battles at Philippi; by which Brutus and Caſſius loſt their lives, and Rome her liberty.

Whether Finck could have held out any longer or not at Maxen, is a queſtion that muſt be referred to the deciſion of a court-martial. But this is not likely to take place till peace is concluded; for it is not probable that there will be, before that period, any exchange of priſoners. Auſtria would have little to gain by it. Thus much has however tranſpired, that Wunſch, a general officer of

of noted bravery, who contributed ſo much to the reſcue of Saxony, would neither ſign the capitulation, nor give his aſſent to it; according to the example ſet by Beck, in 1757, at the inglorious ſurrender of Breſlaw.

Maxen will, at any rate, be conſidered as the Narva, the Blenheim, of the Pruſſians. It will be a ſtain upon their trophies, which they will do well to wipe out as ſoon as poſſible, by ſome great and glorious exploit. Meanwhile they may conſole themſelves with the reflection, that the Romans, who could boaſt of the battles of Zama, Pidna, Alexia, and ſo many other ſignal victories, which gave them the dominion of the world, were once under the neceſſity of laying down their arms, and bending their necks under the Caudian yoke.

We ſhall ſee what Daun will do after this fortunate enterpriſe, after having leſſened the King's army by at leaſt a third. If by paſt events we might form a judgment of the future, we ſhould conjecture, that

that having taken at Maxen the hornet that infeſted him, he will return within his lines at Plawen, and remain there quietly the whole winter.

LETTER XIV.

On the Peace concluded in the Year 1762, *between England and France.*

To Count Bonomo Algarotti.

WHAT preſumption you will think it in me, my dear brother, to intrude myſelf into the cabinets of Princes, and to give my judgment on the peace lately concluded between England and France! How will it be poſſible for me to decide among as great a variety of opinions as ever were offered on the ſame ſubject?

You, who are as well informed of all the affairs of Europe as any one in it, already know that this peace is called by the

the Engliſh in general *inadequate, unſtable, inglorious*; is thought to be neither ſafe nor honourable, but even in ſome reſpect ignominious. On the other hand, it has appeared ſo much the reverſe in the eyes of my Lord Bute, who ſigned it, that he declared in the upper houſe, that he deſired no higher honour than to have after his death this inſcription on his tomb-ſtone, *Author of the Peace of* 1762.

The truth is, that the articles were known ſome months before the treaty was concluded; and, in all probability, the Engliſh miniſtry had whiſpered theſe articles abroad, in order to diſcover what reception they would meet with, to feel the pulſe of the people, and to prepare them for the meaſure. The ceſſion of Canada and Louiſiana, as far as the Miſſiſippi, no doubt, gave much ſatisfaction; the Britiſh empire in North America being by theſe means enlarged to an almoſt infinite extent, and the French ſettlements there annihilated, which had been ſo many thorns in the ſide of the Engliſh colonies: but thoſe articles by which

France recovers Martinico, Guadaloupe, Marigalante, and the other ſugar iſlands, with Goree, and the right of fiſhing on Newfoundland, were highly reprobated. To what purpoſe, ſaid they, ſuch a waſte of treaſure, and ſo many victories, if the fruit of them is to be loſt by ſuch conſiderable reſtitutions? That it had pleaſed providence to lay France at the mercy of England: why then raiſe her up again, and replace her in her former ſituation? That no friend to his country could ſubſcribe to ſuch articles; but perhaps they were imaginary, and that the Miniſter would one day or other ſtep forth and expoſe their falſhood.

On this occaſion one of thoſe little productions made its appearance in London, which the Engliſh call *Pamphlets*, but which uſually contain more matter than large volumes elſewhere; and was the cauſe of much argument and commotion. What added to its weight was its being both mercantile and political, and founded upon calculations that ſeemed to be drawn up with much preciſion. The author was a Mr. Heathcote, a gen-

a gentleman of ſome note, and a member of parliament, who, having in the decline of life retired to his country ſeat, thence exhibited to the Prime Miniſter the zeal and patriotiſm of a good citizen. If thoſe articles of the intended peace, which had been ſpread abroad, ſhould take place, as they actually did afterwards, he preſaged nothing leſs than ruin to the nation. He ſhewed the great ſuperiority that France had over England, before the war, by her profitable traffick with Africa and America: that from her ſugar iſlands ſhe had reaped annually a net profit of about a million and a half ſterling; while England cleared from Jamaica, and all her other iſlands, a balance of no more than one hundred thouſand: that France had gained annually, by the Newfoundland fiſhery, a million, three hundred and fifty thouſand ſterling; England, only three hundred thouſand: beſides, that this fiſhery was a flouriſhing ſeminary for the French navy; for whoever has made a voyage or two to Newfoundland, muſt have experienced, in that ſpace of time, the moſt dreadful tempeſts, the moſt impenetrable fogs, the moſt inclement

weather, the roughest seas, and in short, all the terrors of the ocean; so that he becomes an excellent recruit for a ship of war. He shewed that England could make but slender advances by the industry of her American colonies, by the tobacco of Virginia and Maryland, and the rice of Carolina; while he demonstrated, on the other hand, the immense profits which would accrue to France, from the possession of Goree, in the ivory, gold-dust, and gum trade; besides the advantages it would afford her in the purchase of negroes, part of whom served to cultivate the French islands, and the remainder were sold for ready money to the Spaniards. So that, to restore to the French their sugar-islands and Goree, together with the right of fishing on the banks of Newfoundland, was the same thing as to give them an annual revenue of above three millions sterling. And what more could a peace have cost them, had the English been worsted? they who had beat their enemies in every quarter of the globe, who had brought them at their feet, and reduced them to their last gasp. That, with such restitu-

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tions and conceſſions, France would very ſhortly recover her loſſes, and be enabled to put to ſea ſuch a powerful navy, as would place her upon an equality with England, and endanger the proſperity of that country, which exiſts, only by its ſuperiority to all other nations, as a commercial and maritime power; that in making the peace they had entirely loſt ſight of their object, which ſhould be to deſtroy the commerce and naval power of France; to reduce her to ſo low an ebb, that there ſhould remain but a ſhadow of the French flag; and, if poſſible, to bring her under the reſtraint of that law which the Romans impoſed upon the Carthaginians after the ſecond Punic War.

The conceſſions made by France to England, of all Canada, and a great part of Louiſiana, a country that reaches from the Gulf of St. Laurence to that of Mexico, Mr. Heathcote ſhewed to be of little conſequence: that the province of Canada, though ſuch a prodigious tract of country, being intenſely cold, barren, and thinly peopled, employed no

more

more than ten veſſels in the fur-trade; and that France was obliged to remit there annually ſeventy thouſand pounds ſterling. Now every one knows, that, in the eyes of a merchant and a politician, one of the ſmall Molucca iſlands is infinitely more reſpectable than the whole empire of Caſan.

Theſe reflections ſeemed to make a very deep impreſſion in the minds of the merchants and the people: but, however that might have been, ſoon after the peace being concluded on thoſe very articles, very few perſons appeared to receive it with pleaſure. There were no marks of feſtivity or rejoicing, no illuminations throughout the capital, not even in the environs of the court. It was a conſiderable time before the chief magiſtrate of the city went to congratulate his Majeſty on the event; however, he went at length, but with a bad grace; and the other corporations were equally cold and tardy in their congratulatory addreſſes.

Was there any reaſon for all this? or, ſhould it not be imputed to the ſpirit of party, and the rage for oppoſing miniſters; to Engliſh obſtinacy, and mercantile inſatiability, which would ſwallow up every thing within its own vortex? Had they not a new enemy upon their backs, the Spaniards; a new ally of the greateſt importance to ſuccour, the King of Portugal, who found himſelf attacked in his own territories, and thoſe utterly defenceleſs; a new war to be carried on by ſea and land? Was not already the numerous fleet and army employed againſt the Havannah reduced almoſt to nothing in the moment of victory, and, though victors, ſcarcely able to preſerve their conqueſts?

It is true. But why were matters brought to this extremity? The expedition againſt Martinico, which it was thought would require a much greater length of time, being finiſhed in the beginning of the year 1761, why not ſail thence immediately, or as ſoon after as poſſible, to the Havannah, that there might be time to reduce it, before the unheal-

unhealthineſs of the ſeaſon, the exceſſive heats, and torrents of rain, which begin to fall in the month of Auguſt, ſhould add to the difficulty? Inſtead of which, the new Miniſter, then at the helm, ſent Pocock and Albemarle ſo late as the end of June; as if nothing could be done in the interval between the reduction of Martinico and the deſcent upon the Havannah.

With regard to the new war in Portugal, that alſo is to be placed to the charge of the ſame miniſters for, not truſting to the oracle of Mr. Pitt, who, towards the latter end of the year before, had got ſcent of the Family-compact, which he unfolded to the cabinet, ſhewing the ruinous conſequences that might enſue from it to England; but ſuggeſting at the ſame time a prompt, eaſy, and infallible remedy. This was to ſend orders to Admiral Saunders, who was then cruizing near Cadiz, to detach five or ſix ſhips, and either take, ſink, or burn the galleons, which were then on their paſſage from America to Spain. Thus would the Family-compact have been

diſ-

diſſolved of itſelf, every danger would have vaniſhed, the ſources of the enemy's treaſure from the Indies being cut off, the great ſinew of war ſnatched from them. This very ſalutary and political proceeding was oppoſed from a quarter where it would leaſt have been expected, by my Lord Granville, Preſident of the Council, who had already in parliament, under the name of Carteret, ſo often made Sir Robert Walpole tremble, who was the author of the Treaty of Worms, one of the moſt eloquent, and at the ſame time moſt violent, men of his time. He urged the imprudence of ſo ſuddenly giving ſubſtance to a mere ſhadow, and of being drawn by ſuſpicion alone to deciſive meaſures. That Spain ſhould firſt be regularly required to declare herſelf with regard to the matter in diſpute; after which they might determine on ſuch ſteps as would be moſt agreeable to the ſecurity and dignity of Great Britain. That ſuch a proceeding as was now adviſed would be entirely repugnant to the preſent ſyſtem of politics, and would be entering on a war like Hottentots or Cannibals, not in conformity to

the practice of Europeans, much leſs to the generoſity of brave Engliſhmen. Pitt replied, that the affair was but too manifeſt; that his ſuſpicions reſted on the ſtrongeſt foundations, which he ſhewed by the documents he had brought along with him: that the occaſion was preſſing, and the caſe ſimilar to that of Saguntum. All theſe arguments were urged in vain; Granville replied, and gained over the opinion of the greateſt part of the council then preſent, together with that of the young King, George the Second having died ſome months before: ſo that Pitt was obliged, that he might not be concerned in the wreck of the veſſel, to abandon that helm, which he had till then ſo happily directed, but which he found that he could govern at his own diſcretion no longer. It did not appear to him either ſafe or honourable to continue reſponſible for the event of meaſures, which hereafter were to be dictated by others. In fine, whether from envy, which finds its way even into the breaſts of great and eminent men, or from whatever cauſe, Granville oppoſed that very meaſure which he would himſelf have adopted, had

had he been in the place of Pitt; and the latter retired from the adminiſtration of public affairs.

Hoc fonte derivata clades.

In the mean while the Spaniſh galleons paſſed through the midſt of the Britiſh fleet, and had ſcarcely dropped anchor at Cadiz, before Spain took off the maſk, and declared herſelf in favour of France. Pitt was regarded in England as a Prophet; and it is ſaid, that the King himſelf afterwards complimented him in the moſt gracious manner on his extraordinary penetration. But it had been better to follow his advice, and not to wait till there was cauſe to admire his prophetic genius.

Pitt having withdrawn himſelf, the councils of the cabinet were no longer ſo determined as they had been; and that in the moſt critical juncture, which required the utmoſt firmneſs and reſolution in miniſters, the eyes and thoughts, not only of England, but of all Europe, being fixed upon them.

To enumerate every preciſe condition on which England ſhould have made a peace, would be extremely difficult, and perhaps ſuperfluous. It will be ſufficient to draw a ſketch of the foundation on which it ſhould have been grounded, by attending to no other matters, but what are eſſential to the true and permanent intereſts of the ſtate.

With this object in view, it will be found, that for a country like England, which is far from being one of the moſt populous in Europe, the number of whoſe inhabitants, reckoning thoſe of her American colonies, does not amount to above twelve or thirteen millions, vaſt conqueſts, which require many poſts and garriſons to protect them, are by no means deſirable. She has therefore no buſineſs with Canada, or Louiſiana. How many heads ſhall we not loſe for a few hats? ſaid the Duke of Mirepoix; and how many heads muſt not England ſend to preſerve thoſe few hats, to the forts of Niagara and Frontenac, to Montreal and Quebec?

There

There is but one conſiderable advantage that can reſult to the Engliſh from the ceſſion of Louiſiana and Canada; which is, that they will be freed from the dread of an enemy, who, on their rear, and upon their flank, was perpetually contriving ſome miſchief, and ſpiriting up the ſavages of the continent againſt them. But is this advantage, as matters now ſtand by the treaty, real and entire? Such, no doubt, it would have been, had the French been driven entirely out of North America, and not ſuffered to ſet foot on any part of it. But are they not ſtill eſtabliſhed in New Orleans, at the mouth of the Miſſiſippi, and in poſſeſſion of all Weſt Louiſiana?

This ſole advantage thus appears imaginary; and the Engliſh muſt ſtill keep on their guard againſt the French in that part of the world. What then ſhould have been done? My opinion is, that they ſhould have reſtored to the French all that they have taken from them in the interior parts of the American continent, and been contented with ſecuring Acadia, and St. John's, and all the other

parts

parts contiguous to the ocean. In thoſe places I would not ſo much as ſuffer a French coloniſt to ſhew his face. The Engliſh colonies might further be ſecured by adding to the ſtrength of Crown Point, which is the frontier of New England towards Canada.

But, above all, a good fleet ſhould be kept during the ſummer, which ſhould ſcour the ſeas from Halifax to the Gulf, and, blocking up the mouth of the river St. Laurence, ſhould prevent the French from ſending any armed ſhips up the river, to carry warlike ſtores or ammunition for the ſavages.

It ſhould alſo be the buſineſs of this fleet to prevent the French, and every other nation, from catching a ſingle cod upon the banks of Newfoundland, or any where elſe in thoſe ſeas.

You will readily conclude, that by my articles of peace, the French were to be entirely deprived of all ſhare in the fiſhery. That is indeed my idea. When we have once brought down an enemy, we ſhould take

take every precaution not to leave him the means of riſing again upon us: beſides, it appeared to me, that the reſtitution of Canada and Louiſiana would be ſufficient to indemnify the French for their excluſion from the fiſhery, conſidering the very low ſtate to which they were reduced. This reſtitution would likewiſe, in my opinion, be an adequate compenſation for the demolition of the fortifications of Dunkirk. But if they did not entirely acquieſce in theſe conditions, Marigalante, or even Guadaloupe, might be given up to them; but by no means Martinico, which commands the entrance into the Gulf of Mexico, and would have afforded the Engliſh infinite advantages in protecting their trade in the Weſt Indies, and harraſſing that of the French, and with its commodious harbour of St. Pierre, keeps at bay the pirates, with which thoſe ſeas in time of war are uſually infeſted.

Goree, as an appendage to Senegal, ſhould never have been given up to them, that they might not come in for any ſhare in that rich traffick in gums and gold-

gold-duſt: and, as for the trade in negroes, they would have had other means of ſupplying their colonies with them. In fact, Mr. Pitt himſelf, when concerting the heads of a treaty with Buſſy, could never be induced to ſeperate Goree from Senegal.

Belleiſle ſhould be given up in exchange for Mahon; and, if the French ſtill made any difficulty about Goree, one of the neutral iſlands might be thrown into the ſcale.

Some perſons may perhaps think, that I have not made ſo equal a partition, as might be, between France and England. I allow it. But is there any neceſſity for ſuch an equal partition? Or, ſhould not rather thoſe, who have been the loſers during the war, continue loſers at the concluſion of it? We muſt not always expect ſuch treaties as that of Utrecht, which ended the war about the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, and was a moſt extraordinary ſtroke of good fortune for the French. We ſhould remember the *væ victis!* which Brennus denounced to the Romans

at

at the fort of the Capitol: whereas the French, returning into the moſt important of their loſt poſſeſſions, may be ſaid to have been *magis triumphati quam victi.*

Such a pacification being eſtabliſhed, England would have found it an eaſy matter, without any addition to the number of ſhips and ſeamen, which ſhe uſually maintains in time of peace, to preſerve her conqueſts; by ſtationing only about a thouſand men at Goree, three thouſand at Martinico, and a few in the fortreſſes of certain other iſlands. But how many thouſands will it not now require to garriſon that long chain of forts, with which ſhe muſt bridle the whole continent of North America, an immenſe tract of country, from the Gulf of St. Laurence to that of Mexico? It is not, as was before obſerved, the intereſt of a country like England to poſſeſs large provinces, but rather to have the keys to them: and the key of the ſugar-iſlands is Martinico; of Canada, is the port of Halifax; as Gibraltar and Mahon are of the Mediterranean.

With regard to Spain, if peace was to be made with her at all events, a proper compenſation for Havannah is to be found in the province of Florida; which, lying contiguous to Georgia, ſeems well calculated for the produce of ſilk and indigo. Beſides that it commands the Bahama paſſage, by which the galleons return from Mexico to Europe. The trade winds carry them every year from the windward iſlands into the Gulf, of which they make the circuit, touching at Carthagena, where the fairs are held for all that part of Spaniſh America; and afterwards at Porto-bello, which is the magazine of the treaſures from Chili and Peru, and where they diſtribute ſuch of their European manufactures as are wanted in thoſe countries. They afterwards ſtop at Vera Cruz, which is the mart for Mexico; and then beating up to Havannah, where they wait till the whole convoy is gathered together, on a certain appointed day they weigh anchor from that port, laden with the ſpoils of the New World, and by favour of the currents get out of the Gulf, through the Bahama paſſage, paſſing almoſt within gun-ſhot

of

of St. Auguſtin, the capital of Florida, which has not indeed one of the beſt havens for large ſhips, but one capable of ſome very great improvements. Manilla, by which a trade hurtful to the Spaniards is carried on between Aſia and America, would be of no ſervice whatever in the hands of the Engliſh.

If that noble ſtructure, the Temple of Peace, had been raiſed on ſuch foundations as theſe, the Engliſh might have ſpoken in a loftier tone at Verſailles, and could not have been ſaid to have made war like lions, and peace like lambs: at any rate it was to be wiſhed, for the proſperity of England, that he who had ſo nobly conducted the war, ſhould alſo have been the perſon to adjuſt the peace.

The King of Pruſſia, abandoned at length by England, having no ally but his own valour, wiſhing no other mediator but his own army, found means, without any long conferences or negociations, to conclude a peace, by which he preſerves all his dominions, and does not loſe ſo much as a foot of ground, notwithſtanding the dreadful tempeſt

which ſurrounded him on all ſides, and threatened not to leave him a ſingle province, wherein he might paſs the remainder of his days. The treaty of Hubertſburg will be a memorable monument in the eyes of poſterity, as a miraculous preſervation of the Houſe of Brandenburg, through the virtue of Frederick the Second.

LETTER XV.

On the Military Science of Virgil.

To the Marquis PAOLUCCI,
Governor of Peſaro.

LUCAN would be quite inexcuſeable, if he did not ſhew ſome knowledge of the Art of War. He has taken upon himſelf the taſk of deſcribing the exploits of the greateſt generals in the world; and it may even be aſſerted, that he has verſified a conſiderable part of Cæſar's Commentaries. It is not then

then to be wondered at, that he has ſo well explained the plan of the war againſt Afranius and Petreius, and the fine precaution which Cæſar took, before the battle of Pharſalia, againſt the ſuperiority of Pompey's horſe; at which the gentleman you ſpeak of expreſſes ſo much admiration. Lucan is a portrait-painter, who has drawn ſome fine images from beautiful originals. Homer has infinitely more merit, being indebted only to his own fancy, and having drawn beautiful images from his own imagination only. Beſides, he has given a great number of very convincing proofs of his knowledge in the Art of War. You, my Lord Marquis, who are converſant in every branch of literature, cannot but know, if we are to believe the critics, that Philip derived from Homer the order of the Macedonian phalanx, which became victorious over ſo many nations, and yielded at laſt only to the Roman legion: neither can you be uninformed, that he was Alexander's conſtant companion and counſellor in his conqueſt of Aſia.

But,

But ſome perſons will be apt to think, that a great part of Homer's military reputation is to be attributed to the encomiums of his numerous admirers, who frequently diſcover in his verſes beauties that he never dreamt of, and meanings that he never intended. But the truth is, that Marſhal Puyſegur, who certainly was not a blind admirer of Homer, puts him at the head of the military authors, and does not think him unworthy of his own comments. He obſerves, amongſt other things, with how much reaſon he deſcribes the ſilence of the Greeks, as a charaſteriſtic mark of diſcipline, in oppoſition to the confuſion and uproar of the undiſciplined Aſiatics. He commends the judgment of the Poet in drawing up his army in cloſe order, where pike ſuſtains pike, helmet touches helmet, and ſhield reſts upon ſhield; and he takes notice of the diviſion which Achilles makes of his troops into bodies of five hundred men each, which was about the number of the Roman cohort, and is at preſent the medium of our battalions. He is laviſh in his commendation of the camp that Neſtor traced, in order to cover

cover the army and the ſhipping, with a ditch and rampart around it, flanked by large towers at proper diſtances. In fine, he is very much inclined to think, that Homer muſt have ſeen ſome ſervice, ſo much does he demonſtrate his knowledge of the ſcience.

When I firſt got into my hands Puyſegur's Obſervations on the Military Science of Homer, I muſt confeſs, that I expected he would have glanced a little upon that of Virgil: but not a ſyllable. Yet this latter deſerves, if not a chapter apart, at leaſt that ſome little notice be taken of him. Virgil indeed falls ſhort of Homer in fancy and invention; but he goes far beyond him in ſcience, with which he has thrown a light upon his poem: and there are many paſſages, where he ſhews in particular a profound knowledge of the principles of the military art.

The camp of Æneas, in which he left his troops, after diſembarking them in Italy, to go in queſt of ſuccours in the country of Evander, againſt Turnus and the

the Latins, was regularly fortified. On one ſide it was protected by the Tiber:

Æneadæ duri murorum in parte ſiniſtrâ
Oppoſuêre aciem, nam dextera cingitur amni.
Lib. 9.

on the other ſide, by a ditch and a ſtrong rampart, flanked alſo with towers:

Ingenteſque tenent foſſas, et turribus altis
Stant mœſti——— Ibid.

In the vicinity of the camp was an eminence, occupied by Æneas, and fortified with a wooden tower, which ſerved for an advanced poſt to defend the camp, commanded the country all around, and was ſo ſituated, that the army might quickly have notice of the approach of an enemy:

Turris erat vaſto ſuſpectu & pontibus altis,
Opportuna loco, &c. Ibid.

The Trojan army had orders to keep within this entrenched camp, till Æneas ſhould return with ſuccours; to remain entirely on the defenſive, and not to venture upon the ſucceſs of a battle in the open field. Æneas could not in this con-

conjuncture have adopted a wiſer meaſure:

Namque ita diſcedens præceperat optimus armis
Æneas: ſi qua interea fortuna fuiſſet,
Ne ſtruere auderent aciem, neu credere campo;
Caſtra modo et tutos ſervarent aggere muros.
Ibid.

Turnus, on the other hand, whoſe forces were ſuperior, ſeeing a favourable opportunity for it, wiſhes to act offenſively; and, as one would reaſonably ſuppoſe, to take the advantage of Æneas's abſence, to attack his enemies while without a leader:

Turne, quod optanti Divûm promittere nemo
Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultro!
Æneas, urbe, et ſociis, et claſſe relicta,
Sceptra Palatini, ſedemque petivit Evandri.
Nec ſatis: extremas Coriti penetravit ad urbes,
Lydorumque manum, collectos armat agreſtes.
Quid dubitas? Nunc tempus equos, nunc poſcere currus.
Rumpe moras omnes, et turbata arripe caſtra.

His firſt attempt is to ſet fire to the Trojan veſſels, and by that means cut off their retreat. They were lying in a wet dock, cloſe to the camp, and ſurrounded by the ſame entrenchment; notwithſtanding

ſtanding which, the Latins found means to ſet fire to them:

Claſſem, quæ lateri caſtrorum adjuncta latebat,
Aggeribus ſeptam circum et fluvialibus undis,
Invadit, ſocioſque incendia poſcit ovantes,
Atque manum pinu flagranti fervidus implet.

Ibid.

This attack upon the ſhipping having taken up the greateſt part of the day, he defers that upon the camp till the next morning; and meanwhile makes every neceſſary preparation. He ſurrounds the camp with his troops, and blocks it up completely on every ſide. Before the gates of the camp he poſts the picquets of the cavalry under the command of Meſſapus, with orders to light large fires, in order to diſcover the operations of the enemy. Behind the picquets of cavalry are poſted fourteen companies, of one hundred men each, which were to relieve one another in going the rounds, and keeping watch the whole night, in front of the Latin army:

Nunc adeo melior quoniam pars acta diei:
Quod ſupereſt, læti bene geſtis corpora rebus

Pro-

Procurate, viri; et pugnam ſperate parati.
Interea vigilum excubiis obſidere portas
Cura datur Meſſapo, & mœnia cingere flammis.
Bis ſeptem Rutuli, muros qui milite ſervent,
Delecti: aſt illos centeni quemque ſecuti
Purpurei criſtis juvenes, auroque coruſci,
Diſcurrunt, variantque vices ———

Ibid.

The Trojans again omit no manner of preparation for the defence of the camp: the guards at the different avenues are re-enforced, the gates inſpected, and, above all, communications made between the works:

Hæc ſuper e vallo proſpectant Troës, et armis
Alta tenent; necnon trepidi formidine portas
Explorant, ponteſque et propugnacula jungunt.

At break of day Turnus gives the ſignal for the aſſault, which is conducted in the beſt order imaginable; as it would have been by Demetrius, Poliorcetes, or Vauban, if they had lived in thoſe times. A part of the Latin army having formed the tortoiſe, by placing their ſhields over their heads, ſerve as a covering to their companions, who are employed in filling the ditch, and making a breach in the

parapet. Others endeavour to ſcale the rampart, in thoſe parts where they obſerve it to be leaſt provided with defence. But the Latins being repulſed on every ſide by the valour of the Trojans, they are obliged to draw off to a diſtance, and thence throw their darts and javelins, in order to ſtrip the parapet of its defenders, that they may renew the attack to better effect. Thus does the engagement continue with very little advantage to the aſſailants. The main attack, however, on the advanced poſt, where Turnus is in perſon, ſucceeds better; and the poſt being carried, Turnus ſets fire to the wooden tower,

At tuba terribilem ſonitum procul ære canoro
Increpuit: ſequitur clamor, cœlumque remugit.
Accelerant actâ pariter teſtudine Volſci,
Et foſſas implere parant, ac vellere vallum.
Quærunt pars aditum, & ſcalis aſcendere muros
Qua rara eſt acies, interluceſque corona
Non tam ſpiſſa viris: telorum effundere contra
Omne genus Teucri——
Ibid.

——nec curant cæco contendere Marte
Amplius audaces Rutuli; ſed pellere vallo
Miſſilibus certant—— Ibid.

Turri

Turris erat vasto suspectu & pontibus altis,
Opportuna loco: summis quam viribus omnes
Expugnare Itali, summâque evertere opum vi
Certabant: Troës contra defendere saxis,
Perque cavas densi tela intorquere fenestras.
Princeps ardentem conjecit lampada Turnus,
Et flammam affixit lateri———

Ibid.

The Trojans then, in order to be revenged for so severe a blow, make a sally on another side, and drive the Latins before them. Turnus hastens to rally his people, and to take the advantage which the enemy had offered him, in quitting their entrenchments. He turns the fortune of the day, drives back the Trojans, pursues them, and enters into their camp along with them. There he acts those prodigies of valour, which were afterwards emulated by Rodomonte, when shut up in Paris; and throwing himself into the Tiber, as the other did into the Seine, he gets back safe to his own army. But if Turnus had only been possessed of sufficient coolness, says the Poet, and, instead of giving way to the ebullitions of his courage, thought of opening the gate of the camp, to let in

the

the Latin army, on that day the fate of the Trojans had been decided for ever:

Pandarus, et Bitias, Idæo Alcanore creti,
Quos Jovis eduxit luco ſylveſtris Hiera,
Abietibus juvenes patriis, et montibus æquos,
Portam, quæ ducis imperio commiſſa, recludunt
Freti armis, ultroque invitant mœnibus hoſtem, &c.

Irrumpunt, aditus Rutuli ut videre patentes.
Continuo Quercens, et pulcher Equicolus armis,
Et præceps animi Tmarus, & Mavortius Hæmon,
Agminibus totis aut verſi terga dedere,
Aut ipſo portæ poſuere in limine vitam.
Tum magis increſcunt animis diſcordibus iræ:
Et jam collecti Troës glomerantur eodem,
Et conferre manum, et procurrere longius audent.
Ductori Turno diverſa in parte furenti
Turbantique viros perfertur nuncius, hoſtem
Pervere cæde novâ, & portas præbere patentes.
Deſerit incœptum, atque immani concitus irâ
Dardaniam fuit ad portam ———

Hic Mars armipotens animum viresque Latinis
Addidit, & ſtimulos acres ſub pectore vertit,
Immiſitque ſugam Teucris, atrumque timorem.
Aſt alios ſecum includit, recipitque ruentes:
Demens! qui Rutulum in medio non agmine regem
Viderit irrumpentem, ultroque incluſerit urbi,
Immanem veluti pecora inter inertia tigrim.

Et

Et ſi continuo victorem ea cura ſubiſſet,
Rumpere clauſtra manu, ſocioſque immittere portis,
Ultimus ille dies bello gentique fuiſſet.

Æneas at length arrives with his fleet from Tuſcany, having on board a conſiderable re-enforcement, particularly of cavalry, in which the Trojan army was very deficient. He makes good his landing in ſpite of all the efforts of Turnus to prevent it, and immediately changes the face of affairs from defenſive to offenſive operations. The Trojans are no longer blocked up within their lines; but ſally forth, take poſſeſſion of the field, and begin their march towards the capital of King Latinus. The order of march is ſuch as is beſt adapted to the nature of the country which they have to paſs through. That between the Trojan camp and the capital of King Latinus, is partly champaign and partly mountainous. Æneas takes with the infantry the road over the mountains, and makes the cavalry march at the foot of them through the plain; parties of the latter being detached on all ſides to ſcour the country, and to reconnoitre the poſition and movements of the enemy.

Æneas, ut fama fidem, miſſique reportant
Exploratores, equitum levia improbus arma
Præmiſit, quaterent campos: ipſe arduа montis
Per deſerta jugo properans adventat ad urbem.
Lib. 11.

The ſame plan of marching the infantry over the mountains is adopted by Turnus, who profits by his knowledge of the country, to take poſſeſſion of ſome defiles, through which Æneas muſt neceſſarily paſs, in his way to the capital: his intention is to take poſt on certain heights upon the road, to oppoſe Æneas's march; and he hopes to beat him by means of his advantageous poſition. He gives orders, at the ſame time, to Camilla, Meſſapus, and the other leaders of the cavalry, to march againſt the Trojan cavalry in the plain, and ſuſtain their charge, while he is engaged with Æneas.

Furta paro belli convexo in tramite ſylvæ,
Ut biviaſ armato obſidam milite fauces.
Tu Tyrrhenum equitem collatis excipe ſignis,
Tecum acer Meſſapus erit, turmæque Latinæ,
Tyburtique manus, ducis et tu concipe curam.
Sic ait, & pariter Meſſapum in prælia dictis
Hortatur;

Hortatur, ſocioſque duces, et pergit in hoſtem.
Eſt curvo anfractu vallis accommoda fraudi,
Armorumque dolis, quam denſis frondibus atrum
Urget utrinque latus, tenuis quo ſemita ducit;
Anguſtæque ferunt fauces, adituſque maligni.
Hanc ſuper, in ſpeculis ſummoque in vertice montis,
Planities ignota jacet, tutique recepſus,
Seu dextra lævave velis occurrere pugnæ,
Sive inſtare jugis, & grandia volvere ſaxa:
Huc juvenis nota fertur regione viarum,
Arripuitque locum, & ſylvis inſedit iniquis.

Ibid.

The adverſe ſquadrons meet on the plain in good order. As ſoon as they come within bow-ſhot of each other, they begin to engage with their miſſile weapons; and, after ſkirmiſhing ſome time with various ſucceſs, the two lines charge home upon each other, and commence a moſt furious and obſtinate combat; which is painted in a very lively manner by Virgil, in colours which were all his own: for Homer, in all his battles, never mentions a word of cavalry, but brings only infantry and chariots into the field.

At length, Camilla ſlain, the troop that was under her command gives way, and

is ſoon followed by the remainder of the Latin cavalry. The Trojans purſue them cloſe, and drive them up to the walls of the city. The news having reached Turnus, he is apprehenſive of being taken in flank by the enemy's horſe, while he has Æneas to oppoſe in front; of being incloſed between the two, and having his retreat to the city intercepted: he therefore thinks of drawing off, while it is yet in his power to retire. Æneas, after beholding his cavalry victorious in the plain, purſues his march through the defiles evacuated by the enemy, and, almoſt at the ſame time with Turnus, arrives before the town, where he pitches his camp, and draws the lines of circumvallation. It is thence he afterwards goes forth to fight Turnus in ſingle combat, which puts an end to the war, and to the poem.

At manus interea muris Trojana propinquat,
Etruſcique duces, equitumque exercitus omnis
Compoſiti numero in turmas——

Jamque infra jactum teli progreſſus uterque
Subſtiterat: ſubito erumpunt clamore, frementesque
Exhortantur equos: fundunt ſimul undique tela
Crebra, nivis ritu, cœlumque obtexitur umbrâ.

Bis Tuſci Rutulos egere ad mœnia verſos,
Bis rejecti armis reſpectant terga tegentes.
Tertia ſed poſtquam congreſſi in prœlia, totas
Implicuêre inter ſe acies, legitque virum vir.

Prima fugit, dominâ amiſſâ, levis ala Camillæ:
Turbati fugiunt Rutuli, fugit acer Atinas:
Diſjectique duces, deſolatique manipli
Tuta petunt, & equis averſi ad mœnia tendunt.

Interea Turnum in ſilvis ſæviſſimus implet
Nuncius, & juveni ingentem fert Acca tumultum:
Deletas Volſcorum acies, cecidiſſe Camillam,
Ingruere infenſos hoſtes, & Marte ſecundo
Omnia corripuiſſe, metum jam ad mœnia ferri.
Ille furens (nam ſæva Jovis ſic numina poſcunt)
Deſerit obſeſſos colles, nemora aſpera linquit.
Vix è conſpectu exierat, campumque tenebat,
Cum pater Æneas, ſaltus ingreſſus apertos,
Exſuperatque jugum, ſylvâque evadit opacâ.
Sic ambo ad muros rapidi, totoque feruntur
Agmine, nec longis inter ſe paſſibus abſunt.
Ac ſimul Æneas fumantes pulvere campos
Proſpexit longe——

Continuoque ineant pugnas, & prœlia tentent,
Ni roſeus feſſos jam gurgite Phœbus Ibero
Tingat equos, noctemque die labente reducat.
Conſidunt caſtris ante urbem, et mœnia vallant.
Ibid.

Such military ſkill does Virgil demonſtrate in laying the plan of a war, firſt

defenſive and afterwards offenſive, according to the particular circumſtances of the parties engaged. With every kind of operation he ſeems to be well acquainted; with the method of pitching the camp, as well as that of attacking or defending it; with the manner of marching an army, as well as with that of conducting it in action; where he ſhews his judgment in employing every arm in that ſituation, in which it is the moſt ſerviceable.

Nor is Virgil's military knowledge to excite our wonder; for the greateſt part of his friends and intimates were ſoldiers, as Pollio, Varus, Mæcenas; even Horace, who had the rank of Tribune at Philippi,

Militiæ quanquam piger et malus,

was qualified to enter into his council of war.

Beſides, war was the profeſſion of the Romans. This was their daily exerciſe and occupation, and was the common topic of diſcourſe at Rome, as commerce

and

and maritime affairs are at Cadiz, the theatre at Paris, and politics in London.

What ſhould rather excite our wonder, is, that it ſhould never have been taken notice of; though that of Homer has been ſo much cried up by critics. For this, however, more than one reaſon may be aſſigned. Homer is the Jupiter of letters, *rexque paterque*. The Iliad was the firſt book put into the hands of the Greeks, and was held in veneration even in thoſe times which we call ancient: its authority was referred to in various matters; and the verſes of that poem were conſidered as ſo many maxims. This is the reaſon it is ſo often cited by the ancient authors; and it is hence that its reputation has been ſo deſervedly eſtabliſhed for military matters. Virgil, on the other hand, lived in an age in which books had been multiplied out of number; of which a proof may be drawn from the immenſe libraries that formed part of the ſplendour of great men's houſes; amongſt others, that of Ptolemy, which was infinitely beyond any modern col-

collection, notwithſtanding the fecundity that the art of printing has produced. The ſcience of Virgil then, not being ſo ſingular, was not ſo remarkable as that of Homer. Beſides, the Roman Poet's commentators ſought for excellencies in his works far different from thoſe now under conſideration: and, if they had ſought them, it probably would have been to little purpoſe; for the Poet makes no affectation of his knowledge, but touches upon the ſubject in the moſt delicate manner imaginable; whilſt they, nurſed and educated in cloiſters, were incapable of tracing out ſuch hidden beauties, being acquainted only with the wars of the quill, how to ſpill ink inſtead of blood.

However this may be, it will be found, on an attentive examination of their merits, that Virgil was not leſs ſkilled in the art of war than Homer; and that he deſerves that encomium paſſed on him by our Sovereign Poet, of joining the Graces to an univerſal knowledge*.

* *E quel ſavio gentil, che tutto ſeppe.*

LET-

LETTER XVI.

On the Poem on the Art of War *.

To Signor FRANCESCO MARIA ZANOTTI,

Secretary to the Bologna Academy.

NOTHING truly is more worthy the curioſity of a man of your taſte, than the Poem on the Art of War. You will there obſerve how the Royal Author has written with the ſame ſpirit with which he fights, and how admirably his precepts conform to the examples which he furniſhes every day. Does he not appear to have drawn his own portrait in the following verſes?

Il faut ſur l'ennemi régler vos actions,
Le prévenir par-tout, occuper un paſſage;
Marcher rapidement, ſaiſir ſon avantage,
Se retirer ſans perte, avancer à-propos,
Et toujours l'occuper par des deſſeins nouveaux.

And

* Written by the King of Pruſſia.

And in many other paſſages he gives a ſketch of what he had already done in the two paſt wars of Sileſia, and of what he was to do in the preſent, the moſt important and the moſt terrible ever kindled in the world.

In the firſt canto we have a view of the elementary manœuvres or evolutions of the infantry and cavalry, ſo finely drawn, that we wonder how it can have been done with the French pencil, which is not ſo delicately expreſſive as the Italian or the Greek. The deſcription and encomium of the military diſcipline inculcated by Vegetius, and ſo ſtrictly obſerved by the Roman and Pruſſian armies, conclude the firſt canto, which could not be cloſed by a finer line than the following:

Qui ne ſait obéir, ne ſaura commander.

In the ſecond he treats of that great point, the choice of an encampment adapted to the particular circumſtances of the army, and to the deſigns of the commander:

Sitôt qu'on a choiſi les lieux des campemens,
On voit tracer, bâtir, & croître, en peu de tems,
Places, maiſons, palais de cette ville immenſe:
L'élite de l'état y tient ſa réſidence;
Le travail y préſide, il élève ces toits
Sans l'aide du ciment, des pierres, ni du bois.
Tout ſoldat eſt maçon; cet architecte habile
Fait, tranſporte, & refait cette cité mobile.

Is not this a lively and maſterly picture? You will admire no leſs his cenſure of Varus; who, by neglecting on his march to occupy the heights near the famous baths of Pyrmont, fell a ſacrifice, together with his legions, to the bravery of Arminius; a loſs that was long regretted by Auguſtus. He concludes with this golden maxim:

Si vous voulez paſſer ſous un arc triomphal,
Campez en Fabius, marchez comme Hannibal.

The Poet alters his tone in the next canto, and paſſes from particular objects to thoſe more general and extenſive. He begins with a beautiful deſcription of the Temple of Mars; where, amongſt other allegorical perſons, Experience holds a diſtinguiſhed place:

Préſente à tous les faits, préſente à tous les lieux,
Elle inſtruit les eſprits de ce qu'ont vu les yeux.

In her mouth he puts ſome beautiful reflections on the principal points of the ancient and modern military hiſtory; and, in a ſtrain of true ſublime and pathetic, he deſcribes his great grandfather the Grand Elector flying from the banks of the Rhine, and darting upon the Swedes at Ferberlin; marching in the midſt of winter through the frozen regions of Friſch-Haff, to ſuccour Pruſſia, over-run and trampled under foot by the enemy:

Et Thétis, étonnée au bruit de ces récits,
Voit tranſporter des camps ſur ſes flots endurcis.

He returns to particular objects in the fourth canto, and deſcribes the art of encamping and defending places; a deſcription, throughout which the Poet is ever guided by the rules of art, not ſuffering himſelf to be carried away by the enthuſiaſm of imagination; of which this fine paſſage may ſerve as an inſtance:

Je ne vous parle point de ce ſiège fameux,
Qui fit périr Priam, & ſes fils malheureux.
J'honore d'Ilion la poétique cendre,
Et ces combats livrés ſur les bords du Scamandre;
Mais ce ſujet, ſi beau par Virgile chanté,
Oteroit à mes vers leur mâle gravité.

To

To qualify the dryneſs of precept, and at the ſame time to inculcate humanity to thoſe who are appointed miniſters of the vengeance of monarchs, he gives an ample deſcription of the conflagration and maſſacre at the taking of Magdeburg, in the famous thirty years' war, which threw a ſhade upon the glory of the gallant Tilly.

In the fifth canto, he conſiders the method of ſecuring and connecting together the winter quarters. He ſhews the danger of being ſurpriſed, and the ſcandal of it, by the example of Bournonville; who, having extended too much his quarters in Alſace, was ſuddenly attacked by Turenne, and driven on the other ſide of the Rhine, notwithſtanding he had a numerous army, the very flower of Germany. A ſaying on that occaſion is well known, That a Prince, by his Majeſty's *grace*, had put to flight a number of Princes *by the grace of God*. The Poet does not over-look the preparations of every kind which the general is to make; and, above all, the magazines of

proviſions, which he is to collect in the winter, for the ſervice of the following campaign.

L'art de vaincre eſt perdu ſans l'art de ſubſiſter.

Neither does he neglect to warm his reader, amidſt the ſnow and froſt of winter, with a deſcription of the chaſte amours of the warrior, when, returning to his home in that ſeaſon, he re-viſits his wife and children, whom he paints, with a grace of attitude worthy of an Albano, taking off the arms from their father's back, and playing with them.

The ſixth and laſt canto treats of battles, the ultimate ſcope of war, and final deciſion of it:

Soyez lent au conſeil; c'eſt là qu'on délibère:
Mais lorſqu'il faut agir, paroiſſez téméraire.

Qu'en guerrier prévoyant il prépare de loin
Tous les ſecours divers dont l'armée a beſoin;
Qu'en réſources fécond, toujours infatigable,
Par ſa faute jamais le deſtin ne l'accable.

En père bienfaiſant conduiſez votre armée:
Dans vos moindres ſoldats croyez voir vos enfans;
Ils aiment leurs paſteurs, & non point leurs tyrans.

S'il

S'il penſe en général, il s'expoſe en ſoldat;
Loin de recevoir, il donne le combat.

Oppoſez aux revers un front toujours ſérein,
Par votre habileté corrigez le deſtin.

Loin de faire un pont d'or au chef qui ſe retire,
Le parti triomphant ſaiſit l'occaſion;
Il pourſuit chaudement le gain de l'action,
Il veut en ce jour même achever ſon ouvrage.

Such ſhould be the portrait, ſuch the lineaments of the general, who at the head of an army has in his diſpoſal the fate of empires. And who will not in this portrait trace the features of that Hero, who ſtands before all Europe conſpired againſt him? The poem itſelf invites you to the peruſal; for I can give you but a faint copy of ſo fine an original. You will ſee a writer, who joins the livelieſt fancy to the moſt profound ſcience; who, impartial in his criticiſms, holds the balance equally ſuſpended between Montecuccoli and Turenne; who knows how to allow his enemies their due merit, and to invigorate and animate a didactic ſubject with the ſpirit of Virgil.

You

You remember how the celebrated Patru attempted to diſſuade Boileau from putting his hand to the *Art of Poetry*, as a ſubject too dry and too minute for the French language. So too great refinement was very near depriving the world of one of the brighteſt gems in literature. The very ſame thing has happened with regard to the Art of War: a more celebrated man than Patru, who has enriched, and continues to enrich, that language with ſome of the fineſt productions in it, had adviſed the King not to undertake a poem of that nature: but it is impoſſible to expreſs his ſurpriſe and delight at ſeeing it completed in the courſe of a few months, in the ſame form in which I hope you will have the ſight of it very ſhortly.

I can ſcarcely perſuade myſelf, that Julius Cæſar's poem, called *Iter*, was equal to this of Frederick's; as I much doubt, whether Cæſar could have made, for the ſpace of five campaigns, ſo vigorous a defence againſt ſuch numerous and powerful enemies, as the Boileau of the ART OF WAR.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

On the Military Science of Nicholas Machiavel,

Secretary to the Republic of Florence.

AN infinite variety of opinions prevail with reſpect to the military ſcience of the Florentine Secretary. I muſt confeſs, the common notion is, that his Treatiſe on the Art of War is ſcarcely worth the peruſal. His not having been a ſoldier by profeſſion weakens much the authority of his writings on that ſubject. People in general imagine that war is a continued ſcene of action; that one who has been but a few weeks in the field, who has been once or twice only in ſight of an enemy, or at leaſt in ſome trifling engagement, muſt have much more ſkill in the art of war, than another who has made Vegetius or Polybius the ſtudy of his life; that the knowledge of a corporal or a ſerjeant in this ſcience is more extenſive than that of the moſt learned

man

man in the world; and, in a word, that it is not to be acquired in any degree by ſpeculative enquiry, but by practice alone and actual ſervice. Theſe aſſertions they confirm by inſtances of many curious ſpeculations, which, though promiſing enough in theory, have, when put to the teſt of experiment, vaniſhed like ſo many caſtles in the air; by the abortive attempt, among others, which Pompeius Targo made at the ſiege of Oſtend, and Roberval at that of Thionville, when the Arch-duke Albert, and Prince Condé, who ſent for them, expected by their means to get poſſeſſion of thoſe towns. So, when they ſee in the title-page of the ART OF WAR, that the author is Secretary to the Republic of Florence, they conſider it as mere common-place, which they may have already ſeen in other authors.

What can we ſay to all theſe objections? It will not be a difficult matter to anſwer them, if neceſſary. We may oppoſe to the examples before us, of Targo and Roberval, other inſtances of men, who, having

having acquired the knowledge of a ſcience in theory only, have ſhewn ſuch knowledge to be neither contemptible nor uſeleſs. Bertola the lawyer is ſtill remembered in Turin, who, without knowing the ſmell of gun-powder, attained to ſuch a degree of eminence in the ſcience of fortification, by means of ſtudy alone, that the late King of Sardinia had recourſe to him on ſeveral occaſions. Every one has heard of Fauſto, a man of letters, and profeſſor of the Greek language; who, unpractiſed in ſhip building and every other mechanic art, revived, ſomewhat more than two hundred years ago, the *Cinquereme*, the uſe of which had been long forgotten: and this ſame man proved the ſuperiority of its conſtruction, in a regatta before the Doge and Senate of Venice. Bembo produces another inſtance of the ſame kind, in one of his letters to Rhannuſio; and thanks God he has wherewithal to convince the ignorant and the prejudiced, that men of learning can do ſomewhat elſe beſides read and write.

No ſenſible man, therefore, will imagine, that practice is the only method of learning the art of war. To the ordinary claſs of mankind, as the Chevalier Folard obſerves, it is a profeſſion; but to men of genius, a ſcience. This was the ſenſe of the Spartans, thoſe heroes of ancient times, who directed that public lectures ſhould be delivered on tactics. And how many volumes have been written by the Romans on the Art of war! The ſcience of war is nothing more than a collection of precepts for offence and defence, gathered by experience, and indeed by practice; but by the practice of all nations, and of all ages, ſubject to the ſtricteſt critical examination by the rules of right reaſon: a collection of precepts, many of which deduce their origin from the principles of the moſt refined arts. Now, is it not clear to every thinking perſon, that the knowledge of ſuch a ſcience is not ſo likely to be acquired by a few years practice, as by extenſive reading, long ſtudy, and meditation?

But it may be ſaid, that I am now running on with theſe common-place arguments,

ments, without ever taking notice of the moſt formidable objection againſt the Secretary. Did he not himſelf make an ample confeſſion of his own inſufficiency, when, being requeſted to reduce his theory to practice, he abſolutely declined putting it to the proof? So that this *mighty warrior*, who took ſo much pains to extol the Roman diſcipline, durſt not put himſelf at the head of a ſingle cohort, modelled after his own method, (if we are to believe Cardanus) though earneſtly ſollicited to it by the Duke of Urbino. Now, if we conſider the real weight of this objection, it will not appear ſo very formidable. What reaſon have we to ſuppoſe the Secretary declined the Duke's propoſal from diffidence in his plan, rather than from prudential motives? He laid down a new ſyſtem of military diſcipline, in oppoſition to the received uſages of the times. Of a frank and open diſpoſition, little uſed to intrigues of ſtate, he might poſſibly have been apprehenſive of offending the Duke, or of making himſelf an object of ridicule to his courtiers. Beſides, who can tell but this Prince (as is often the faſhion with

other great men) meant no more than to divert himſelf at the Secretary's expence? For we have had inſtances of Sovereigns taking theſe freedoms with perſons, for whom they have had a very great eſteem. You may have read perhaps of what paſſed between Meibomio and Naudeo, and that Pallas of the North, Queen Chriſtina of Sweden, when her Majeſty took it in her head to order one of them to ſing in preſence of her whole court, becauſe he had publiſhed a book on the muſic of the Greeks, and the other to dance to the ſame tune, becauſe he had written on the dances of the ancients. The Secretary had at leaſt much reaſon to apprehend, that he would have been moſt ſeverely ridiculed by people of the profeſſion, and that every little blunder of the ſoldiers, in the performance of theſe new-fangled manœuvres, would have raiſed an univerſal peal of laughter at the *Military Doctor*.

I confeſs, upon the whole, my opinion of the matter is, that Macchiavel's book may afford a great deal of uſeful information: and this I judge, becauſe it appears

appears very clearly, that he has ſtudied the art of war with as much attention as that of politics, in which all the world acknowledges him a maſter;—becauſe he has laid open the reaſon of things, and traced events up to their ſeveral cauſes;—becauſe his precepts have been confirmed by the practice of many great generals, who have flouriſhed ſince his time;—and, finally, becauſe he ſeems to have inveſtigated this ſubject, with that penetrating ray of genius, with which he has illumined ſeveral other branches of human knowledge.

I muſt intreat you to read the book itſelf; and, I flatter myſelf, I ſhall not then be ſingular in my opinion of it.

Villa, June 15, 1759.

L. E T.

LETTER XVIII.

On the ſame Subject.

I WILL not do the Secretary the injuſtice of ſending you an extract from his Art of War; for it is impoſſible to judge of the merits of a book by an extract: though, as it is your particular deſire, I will make ſome remarks on a few paſſages, as they occur to me in my way, that you may have a greater curioſity to read the original, and that you may ſee upon what I found my judgment of it.

What Macchiavel obſerves is very true, that every law or inſtitution, deviſed for the public good, to reſtrain the vicious inclinations of bad men by the fear of puniſhment, would be vain and fruitleſs, unleſs ſome power were at hand to maintain and protect them. Whence there are not, in human nature, any two things more cloſely and intimately connected, than the civil and military character.

Con-

Conſidering himſelf, therefore, as a Senator, as a Politician, he thought it his buſineſs to treat of the affairs of war, as well as thoſe of peace; though he allows it himſelf to be a bold undertaking to attempt throwing a new light upon matters beyond his profeſſion; which he was the rather induced to attempt, as at that time military diſcipline was much degenerated and corrupted in Italy. The Princes of that age placed but little dependence on infantry; the greateſt part of their ſoldiers were mounted: and, above all, they were terrified at the prodigious train of artillery, which Charles the Eighth, King of France, brought with him, when he invaded Italy, and took poſſeſſion of Naples. Their armies were mercenary, and not compoſed of their own ſubjects; diſorderly and licentious; void of bravery, though full of pride and boaſting; commanded by thoſe generals, called *Condottieri*, who ſold their ſervices, now to one Prince, and now to another: to whom we cannot very aptly apply what Taſſo puts into the mouth of Godfrey de Bulloign; "I am

am come to Aſia to make war, and not to traffick."

In order to be as ſparing as poſſible of the ſweat and blood of their ſoldiers, they took care not to hurt one another in battle, but endeavoured to make their adverſaries priſoners without ſlaughter, and afterwards releaſed them without ranſom. They neither fortified their camps with ditches nor ramparts; and, at the ſiege of a town, both the beſiegers and beſieged ſuſpended their operations during the night, and mutually agreed not to fire upon one another. Theſe troops were valiant amongſt their friends, daſtardly before their enemies: they were enough to diſgrace Italy, though not to defend it from the attacks of foreign powers; amongſt whom, and particularly among the Swiſs, there was ſome appearance of diſcipline, and ſome remains of ancient valour.

The Secretary therefore attempted to perſuade the Princes of Italy to exert their internal ſtrength, and to arm their ſubjects, in whom they might place more con-

confidence than in ſtrangers; ſince thoſe who fight in defence of their Sovereign, fight, at the ſame time, in defence of their own property, and of their own honour. He would have the ſoldiers taken principally from the country, where they are enured to fatigue, uſed to bear the exceſſive heat of the ſun; expert in the management of the pick-axe, and the ſpade; accuſtomed to carry loads, and to put up with all manner of hardſhips. He would have them kept in continual exerciſe, to make them ſtrong and hardy, to teach them the uſe of their arms, and to keep their ranks through all manœuvres, and in every conjuncture. He would have them bound to obey and reverence their commander, by the obligation of an oath, and by other ſolemn ties; obſervant of diſcipline, ſober and modeſt: that the profeſſion of arms might be held ſacred, as Livy calls it, when ſpeaking of the military inſtitutions of his countrymen.

However neceſſary artillery may be for the attack and defence of fortified places, for the protection of a camp, and

however uſeful in the field of battle; however neceſſary cavalry to make diſcoveries, ſcour the country, raiſe contributions, intercept convoys, and to complete a victory; yet he maintains, that the nerve and ſinew of war is infantry; which can march and ſuſtain itſelf in every ſituation, and can perform all the various manœuvres with the greateſt eaſe and celerity; (for a foot-ſoldier has not, like a trooper, the cowardice or obſtinacy of the beaſt he is upon to ſtruggle with;) that, in a word, it is the ſimpleſt and moſt perfect military order; and, when properly inſtituted and diſciplined, that the impetuoſity of horſe, and the fury of artillery, can make but little impreſſion on it.

Obſerve then, how, according to the true principles of the art of war, he begins by expoſing the abuſes that had taken place, through a blind obedience to cuſtom, and the barbarity of the age. What the Princes of Italy laid out upon works of ſculpture and architecture, he would have them employ to a better purpoſe, towards defending their country,

and

and reſcuing it from ſlavery. In order to complete this noble deſign, having ſtudied the military ſcience of the ancient Romans, and having conſidered what the modern nations of Europe, though variouſly armed and diſciplined, had borrowed from them, and particularly his neighbours the Swiſs, he attempted once more to bring into the field the *Legion*, ſo many ages after its diſſolution; which defended Italy and Rome againſt the riches of Africa, the genius of Greece, the multitude of the Gauls, and the ſtrength of the Germans; and which, at length, diſplayed its eagles in every quarter of the globe.

His legion was compoſed of ſix thouſand foot, and three thouſand horſe, and had a few field-pieces attached to it. One half of the cavalry were heavy, the other light; and, as the cavalry was on a tolerably good footing, he made no innovation in its eſtabliſhment or diſcipline. The infantry was divided into cohorts, each conſiſting of about five hundred men; and each cohort had its conſtable, with muſical inſtruments and colours, its

centurions and decurions, or corporals. Half the infantry were armed like the ancient Romans; that is, with a helmet, a breaſt-plate, greaves and braſſets, with the ſword and buckler: the other half as the Germans or Swiſs were in that age; that is, two thouſand with pikes, and one thouſand with muſkets. He placed the pikes in the front of the battalion, to open the enemy's ranks, and put them in diſorder: or he oppoſed them upon occaſion to the enemy's horſe, when they were more formidable than his own; pikes being beſt adapted to charge, or to ſuſtain the charge of cavalry. Thoſe armed with the ſword and buckler were drawn up in the rear of the pikemen. Theſe laſt, when they had forced their way through the ranks of the enemy, and when the fight became cloſer, being no longer ſerviceable, on account of the extreme length of their weapons, were ſucceded by the *ſcudati*, or thoſe armed with the ſword and buckler, who could manage their arms in any ſpace, however confined and narrow. He made uſe then of the muſketeers to begin the action, before the junction of the oppoſed armies;

mies; of thoſe armed according to the German method, to break the line, and put the enemy into confuſion; of thoſe armed after the Roman method, to complete the rout, and purſue the victory. You ſee then, he introduced every offenſive arm, in its proper time and place, according to its nature and peculiar advantages. He did not endeavour, by one mean alone, to attain the ſeveral ends propoſed; as is the caſe with many ignorant perſons, who, as ſoon as they diſcover a method of producing ſome great effect in any art or practice, give up their whole attention to that method, and neglect every other. He, on the contrary, made uſe of every one he could lay hold of, as they were ſeverally adapted to his purpoſe. Some time ago, I was informed by a very eminent muſician, that the excellence, ſo much boaſted of, in the ancient muſic, aroſe principally from the concord or agreement betwixt inſtruments of various ſounds, by which they acquired the art of working upon the paſſions, and of producing, as they pleaſed, either rage or complacency, in the breaſt of their hearers. Now, does not this

appear

appear applicable to the Secretary, that the different weapons he made uſe of, whether to annoy the enemy near or at a diſtance, whether to ſuſtain their charge, or to attack and rout them, are, in his hands, the various means of war, from the conjunction and agreement of which, is produced that great end, Victory?

But whether you admire this ſimile or not, which poſſibly may be as little to the purpoſe as moſt others, the fact is, the Secretary's ſpeculations were not entirely fruitleſs. A few years before his death, a legion was raiſed in Tuſcany, armed and diſciplined according to his ſyſtem. It was commanded by John de Medicis, who gained ſuch reputation at the head of it, as no other Italian has enjoyed ſince the fall of the Roman empire. He was killed in Lombardy; and Berni ſays, the Genius of War expired with him. In that war this new eſtabliſhed corps gave many proofs of its ſuperior valour; as it did likewiſe after the death of John de Medicis, in the war of Naples, when it was taken into the pay of the republic of Florence, together with

ſome

ſome French troops, and known by the name of the *black bands*. So that the Italians once more diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the excellence of their diſcipline, their patience under fatigue, and bravery in battle. Nor did Italy alone improve by the leſſons of the Secretary. The King of France made a ſtill better uſe of them. He had expreſsly warned that Monarch, not to truſt in foreign mercenaries, but to arm his own ſubjects, in that paſſage of the *Art of War*, where he affirms, that it is the King of France's negligence, in this reſpect alone, that weakens his kingdom: and more expreſsly again in his *Prince*, he pronounces that judgment, or rather prophecy, that France would be invincible, if the order of Charles the Seventh was preſerved and augmented; who, knowing the neceſſity he was under of exerting his own force, eſtabliſhed a ſtanding army of *gendarmes* and infantry. Louis the Eleventh, his ſon, diſbanded the infantry, and took Swiſs into his pay; which error, ſince followed by others, as the Secretary then declared, and as we now perceive, has been the cauſe of all the diſorders and dan-

dangers in which that kingdom has been involved. Now, have we not reaſon to conclude, that the advice of a man of Macchiavel's reputation muſt have made ſome impreſſion on Francis the Firſt, a Prince of great abilities, and one who profeſſed a prodigious eſteem for the men of genius among the Italians? This Prince then reſolved to put arms into the hands of his own ſubjects; nor did he ſtop there, but even revived the famous order of the legion; ſeveral of which he raiſed, conſiſting of ſix or ſeven thouſand men each, and did that at large which had been before attempted in miniature, by John de Medicis. This great captain, Francis took into his ſervice, and had him in his camp before Pavia, where he gave many proofs of courage and conduct: nay, the King himſelf went ſo far as to declare, that, if Medicis had not been dangerouſly wounded ſome days before that memorable action, he doubted not but it would have terminated in his favour. Father Daniel ſuppoſes, as Francis took it in his head to eſtabliſh the Legion, that he muſt have ſtudied ſome of the ancient authors: we too may venture

venture to ſuppoſe, that he had conſulted likewiſe ſome of the *moderns*. On this account the French muſt confeſs themſelves under ſome obligation to the Italians.

Villa, June 21, 1759.

LETTER XIX.

On the Modern Legion.

THE legion was very ſhort-lived in France. Thoſe raiſed by Francis the Firſt diſappeared ſoon after their inſtitution; and, though they were ſeen once more in the field under Henry the Second, yet they ſoon gave way to another eſtabliſhment: I mean that of regiments, which were then nearly on the ſame footing as they are at this day; nor could Mr. De la Noue, notwithſtanding all he ſaid in his political and military diſcourſes, in the reign of Henry the Third, reſtore the legion to life again.

But this does not prove any defect in its original eſtabliſhment. The French legions, not conforming to the Secretary's plan, made but a very indifferent figure. The method of raiſing and arming the ſoldiers was injudicious and defective; and, in ſhort, there was ſcarcely any thing of Roman in them but the name. In the moſt excellent military inſtitutions the ſtricteſt diſcipline ſhould be kept up, in proportion to their degree of excellence: and the French, you know, were always impatient of diſcipline. This is lamented by many French writers, and particularly by the author of a book on that ſubject, publiſhed in the time of Francis the Firſt; a book of no ſmall reputation, quoted very often by Father Daniel in his Military Hiſtory of France. It was ſuppoſed to be the performance of the Seigneur de Langeay, a man very eminent both in the theory and the practice. He examines with great accuracy the eſtabliſhment of the legion, and proves, that, had its inſtitution been fundamentally good, it would have become at once the defence and the ornament of France. And what do you imagine the world thinks

of

of it at preſent? I know not whether you have read the Reveries or dreams of Marſhal Saxe; but this I know, that you will allow his dreams to be of more value than the moſt profound meditations of moſt other men. His opinion is, that the revival of the legion would give the laſt perfection to the infantry of France. By continual obſervations made on the method of fighting of all nations, ancient and modern, joined to a long practice ſo beneficial to France, this great General diſcovered the advantages that would be derived from a corps of infantry, divided into centuries and cohorts, heavy and light-armed troops, with defenſive as well as offenſive arms, together with a troop of horſe; which might fight in conjunction, and ſupport one another; in a word, that might reſemble the Roman legion, which he ſays, after Vegetius, muſt have owed its original to the inſpiration of a God.

After the teſtimony of ſo great a man in favour of the legion, all that remains for me to ſay is, that I am entirely yours.

Villa, June 25, 1759.

LETTER XX.

On the Line of Battle.

HAVING now given you ſome idea of the modern legion, you are deſirous of ſeeing it drawn up in order of battle. I will endeavour to repreſent it to you as clearly and as conciſely as poſſible.

You remember it is compoſed of ten cohorts. Theſe are drawn up in three lines: five cohorts are in the firſt, three in the ſecond, and two in the third line. Thoſe of the firſt line are ſo cloſe to one another, that there is but an interval of eight feet between them: thoſe of the ſecond are farther ſeparated from each other; and thoſe of the third line have ſtill larger intervals. The lines are eighty feet diſtant from one another. Each cohort is ten deep; the firſt five armed with pikes, the reſt with the ſword and buckler.

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Repreſent to yourſelf a legion drawn up in this manner: imagine a ſecond on its flank, then a third, and again a fourth; and you will have the idea of a regular army in order of battle. The firſt line then will be compoſed of twenty cohorts, the ſecond of twelve, and the third of eight. Now the lines are flanked and ſurrounded by ſeveral bodies of pikemen. On the flank of the pikemen the Secretary poſts the muſketeers, though not to extend, as the pikes do, to the laſt line of the army. He poſts the cavalry in each wing; firſt the heavy; then the light-horſe, in the firſt line only: the artillery in the front of the army. And now you have before your eyes the legions drawn up in order of battle.

You will, no doubt, perceive many advantages in this diſpoſition. The light-horſe, and the *velites*, as he calls the muſketeers, being both on the wings, may mutually ſupport each other in the beginning of the action: and, in the ſame manner, the pikes are at hand to ſupport the heavy horſe, in caſe they are repulſed, and overthrown by the enemy. Beſides, you

you may obſerve how theſe pikes, which are extended along the flanks of the army, may protect your infantry from the enemy's cavalry, when they are more numerous than your own, or when yours are routed and driven off the field of battle.

If you conſider farther the arms and arrangement of the Secretary's infantry, you will diſcover in it all the different advantages of the legion, and of the phalanx. With regard to the arms: the Grecian pikes in the front of each cohort ſerve to break the enemy, and to diſorder their ranks; the Roman ſwords, which are in the rear of the pikes, to complete the victory. As to the diſpoſition, the firſt line being without intervals, and ten deep, has all the force and weight of the phalanx; and has, at the ſame time, the reſources and method of rallying of the legion. If the firſt line be broken, it may retire through the intervals of the ſecond line, and with this re-enforcement renew the fight. Both lines being repulſed, they form between the ſpacious intervals of the third line, and make head once more againſt the enemy. It

has

has not therefore the defect of the phalanx, which, compoſed of men condenſed and conſolidated together, could make but one attack, one effort, and, as he ſays, had but one chance of gaining the battle. His infantry has likewiſe all the lives, as we may call it, of the legion; which being drawn up in three lines, the *haſtati*, *principes*, and *triarii*, in ſuch a manner, that each governed itſelf independently of the others, at the ſame time that they mutually ſuſtained one another; it was requiſite that, to defeat them, they ſhould be repulſed three ſeveral times. And, in fact, we have been witneſſes to the ineffectual exertions of the huge, unwieldy Macedonian phalanx, againſt the ſmaller and more agile battalions that the Roman legion conſiſted of. If all theſe advantages are not ſufficient, it has that likewiſe of not being ſo much expoſed to the fury of the artillery, as a more ſolid and condenſed body.

I could make many other obſervations on this ſubject; but I will leave them to your own reflection.

Villa, July 3, 1759.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

On the Method of encamping.

I OUGHT to return you many thanks for your polite condeſcenſion. Whilſt I expected that you would oppoſe ſome formidable army to ours, and that a dreadful engagement would be the conſequence, behold, you give us up the honour of the victory. You even invite us to pitch our tents, and to lay down our arms. Juſt as you pleaſe. If you will have it ſo, we will encamp, or retire to quarters of refreſhment; for the ſultry heat of the ſeaſon welcomes the ſhade and repoſe.

You are well acquainted with the modern manner of encampment. Armies encamp in the ſame diſpoſition with that in which they are drawn up for action; for the moſt part in two lines; the infantry in the center, and the cavalry on the wings. The front of the camp equals that of the line of battle; and before

before it there is ſufficient ſpace to draw up the army, ſo that it may cover the camp itſelf. The camp, like the army in an engagement, muſt be flanked by ſome village, wood, or riſing-ground, or ſome other natural defence. It has various guards of horſe and foot, ſcouts and *vedettes*, and particularly on the ſide of the enemy: it is ſurrounded by a trench and ſome batteries of cannon. Such was the camp of the allies at Fornova, about a century and a half ago; ſituated, according to Philip de Commines, in a place very ſtrong by nature, and rendered ſtill ſtronger by art, well provided with artillery, and ſo large and ſpacious, that the whole army might be drawn out in it; which, he ſays, was uſual among the Italians.

The great advantage of ſuch a camp, is the facility of marching out of it in line of battle. But, on the other hand, it is attended with two great inconveniences; one of which is, that a convenient ſpot of ground for it will not always preſent itſelf; the other, that it will require an infinity of guards to defend it.

The ancient Romans avoided theſe inconveniences, by contracting their camp, and ſecuring it with ramparts, paliſades, and ditches, ſo as to make it a kind of fortreſs: by the force of labour and induſtry they contrived to make every ſituation ſubſervient to their purpoſes, and could of courſe diſpenſe with a great number of guards. They were more in a capacity to preſerve their horſes, and beſides had not occaſion for ſo many of theſe animals, the maintaining of which coſts ſo much treaſure to the Sovereign, and the feeding ſo much trouble to the commander; the great proportion of cavalry, with which our armies abound at preſent, being chiefly intended for the defence of our encampments. The ſoldiers became more enured to labour, being obliged to fortify their camp ſo often; and, when it was fortified, more confident and ſecure againſt any ſudden attack of the enemy. Being covered by their lines, they had no occaſion to be more apprehenſive of their enemy at one time than another: and they, moreover, fought with more confidence, having, in

in caſe of adverſe fortune, a ſure aſylum ſo near at hand.

Beſides, the commander, being always entrenched, was more the maſter of his own operations; the enemy not having it ſo much in his power to force him to an action.

The firſt inſtance we had in modern times of theſe camps, fortified according to the method of the ancients, was in the wars of Flanders; when it was neceſſary for induſtry to ſupply the want of force; when a handful of fiſhermen undertook to defend their liberty againſt a Sovereign, who, from the heart of the fineſt country in Europe, ſtretched his dominion over a great part of Aſia and America, and, as ſome writer has obſerved, ſaw the ſun riſe and ſet within the bounds of his empire. The Swiſs, being poor and without horſes, and being often at war with rich Princes, who maintained cavalry, were the firſt to reſume the Macedonian *ſariſſa*, or pike, to defend themſelves. So Maurice, Prince of Orange, having to do with the numerous armies of Spain, firſt adopted the Roman practice, of making every camp

a fortreſs, in which a ſmall number of men could defend themſelves againſt a multitude of enemies.

This general, who was ſo well acquainted with his profeſſion, had doubtleſs ſtudied Polybius and Vegetius, who treat at length of the Roman encampments. It is probable alſo, that he had peruſed that part of the Secretary's works, where he conſiders, among the ancient orders, which is the moſt ſuitable to the preſent times. His camp is an oblong ſquare, ſurrounded by a ditch and parapet, with baſtions at the angles, and divided into ſtreets. In theſe are lodged ſeparately the horſe and foot, together with their officers; and there are places ſet apart for the proviſions, ammunition, and baggage. In the center are the head-quarters, or reſidence of the general commanding in chief, who has around him the other general officers of the army. The principal guards are poſted along the parapet; and between it and the tents a ſufficient ſpace is left to manage the artillery in, and, if neceſſary, to draw up the army in line of battle.

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Such a camp is in fact a moving city, which takes along with it its houſes and its ſtreets; its ſquares and its market-places; in ſhort, every thing that is requiſite for a ſociety of human beings: and the principal advantage is, that this city is provided, let it go where it will, with walls or entrenchments, and with artillery, to defend it.

When one has ſeen the Secretary's camp, one may be ſaid to have ſeen that of the Prince of Orange, as it is deſcribed by Stevin, in his Treatiſe on Caſtrametation; ſo much do they reſemble one another. *Nihil hoc ſimili eſt ſimilius.* The Prince of Orange is cried up throughout Europe, as the reſtorer of the ancient diſcipline, while no one ſpeaks a ſyllable of Nicholas Macchiavel. This, however, is a matter of no conſequence. The misfortune is, that this excellent method of contracting and fortifying the camp ſhould be laid aſide. To leſſen the fatigue of the ſoldier on the one hand, they do not perceive that they increaſe it ten-fold on the other, and multiply the danger on every ſide.

For

For our part, let us encamp with the Secretary, and diſmiſs all apprehenſion of danger.

Villa, July 9, 1759.

LETTER XXII.

On the Difficulty of correcting Abuſes of an old ſtanding; and ſome Improvements made in the Diſcipline of the Pruſſian Cavalry.

I Remember having read in Davila, that it was the famous Duke of Parma's cuſtom, when marching through an enemy's country, to pitch his tents ſoon enough, every evening, to have time to fortify his camp. That judicious officer, Montecucculi, recommends likewiſe, if I remember right, that the camp be ſecured either with carriages, paliſades, or ſomething of that kind, from the attacks of the cavalry, with which the Turkiſh armies uſually abound. The Chevalier Folard, who, however he may indulge

indulge fanciful ſpeculations in his notes, is in his precepts always guided by ſound judgment, has ſet apart a chapter for a diſſertation on the ſuperiority of the ancient method of encamping over the modern. I have alſo heard, that Prince Eugene, of glorious memory, wiſhed to revive this cuſtom; and would have attempted it, had he not been aware of the inſuperable difficulties every one muſt have to encounter, who endeavours to correct old abuſes, and to make reaſon get the better of prejudice. How often have not our modern generals more cauſe of dread from the abſurdity of their own people, than from the valour of the enemy! They are frequently conſcious of having ſuffered, on more than one occaſion, by means of ſuch and ſuch diſorders, which have gradually taken root: they are frequently convinced that ſuch and ſuch an improvement, or revival of an ancient inſtitution, would contribute greatly to their ſucceſs. The matter is conſequently propoſed; it is debated; every one is convinced of the truth of it: yet, notwithſtanding all this, no alteration is made. And why? For that wiſe reaſon, be-

cauſe

cauſe what is propoſed is either out of faſhion, or has never been yet practiſed. It is not ſo eaſy a matter to ſuperſede error; and he who does not join the power to the inclination, will in vain attempt it. Do you imagine, that the Pruſſian cavalry would have been ſo remarkable for the perfection of its diſcipline, for that agility and weight, that regularity and fury, which its enemies have felt ſo often, if its inſtitutor had not been a Sovereign Prince? Among other refinements in diſcipline, it was one day propoſed to ſome of the cavalry officers of the moſt conſummate ſkill in their profeſſion, to march a large body of horſe towards an enemy quite in a new manner. Figure to yourſelf the enemy in ſight, but a little either to right or left. You know that the common method is, to wheel a quarter of a circle, and march ſtraight forward; then, as ſoon as they are in a line with him, to wheel another quarter of a circle, and again march forward. Theſe frequent wheelings, and expoſing the flanks to the enemy, did not pleaſe the King: he wanted them to march obliquely, to croſs over the ſhorteſt way towards

towards the enemy, and, what is of the utmoſt conſequence, not to ſhew their flank to him. This being propoſed to ſome old officers, they did not approve of it. And why? Becauſe it is a thing that was never either done or thought of. It has been thought of, and it ſhall be done. The horſemen muſt be all taken to the riding-ſchool, and drilled for the purpoſe. They ſhall. The horſes muſt be drilled too. So ſhall the horſes. Several will get broken limbs before they will be able to perform this manœuvre. What matter, if it ſhould be the means of gaining a victory? The experiment was tried, firſt with a few, afterwards with a larger number; and ſucceeded ſo well, that, not long after, I ſaw ſeveral ſquadrons traverſe a piece of ground, that was none of the ſmootheſt, with as much eaſe as a Spaniſh *genet* would caper from one ſide of the riding-ſchool to the other. But what would have been the reſult, if he, who had genius enough to invent the plan, had not been poſſeſſed of power to put it in execution? This is lamented, and with much reaſon, by Fabricius Colonna, who is introduced by the Secretary

as firſt Interlocutor in his book on the Art of War, which, in imitation of the ancients, he has written in dialogue. "I have a right to complain of nature," ſays he, "who either ſhould not have given me diſcernment enough to diſcover the moſt perfect military order, or ſhould have afforded me the means of putting it in practice."

Thus he finiſhes his diſcourſe; and I ſhall finiſh this idle ſtory of mine, with the aſſurance that I am entirely yours.

Villa, July 16, 1759.

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LETTER XXIII.

On the March of an Army—Muſical Inſtruments—The Plagiariſm of Writers on Military Affairs.

SO, you begin to conceive ſuch an admiration for the Secretary's military talents, that you wonder his authority is not oftener referred to by writers on the art of war. You certainly have reaſon to wonder at it. If you were to read, for example, in that judicious work of Marſhal Puyſegur, how he diſapproves of the practice under Turenne and Condé, of crowding the pikes together in the center of the line, and the muſketeers upon the flanks, and would, on the contrary, have the pikes extended along the whole front of the line, in order to ſupport the horſe; you would expect, but in vain, to find the Secretary quoted: for it is in this very manner that he makes Fabricius Colonna diſpoſe of the pikes along the front of the infantry; and this diſpoſition of his was copied at Lutzen

by Guſtavus Adolphus, and by Monticucculi at St. Gottardo, when, by virtue of this order alone, he ſuſtained the attack of the famous Kiuperli, and the impetuoſity of the Turkiſh cavalry. An old French writer relates, that Marſhal Briſſac, one of the greateſt generals of his age, invented a new method of arranging his army; which was by placing ſome corps of infantry, armed with ſword and buckler, behind the pikemen; who, when the action became cloſe, were to throw themſelves through the files of pikemen upon the enemy. This he calls a new invention, and it is highly extolled by Folard: yet it is in fact the old and original method of fighting, adopted by Fabricius Colonna.

"No one ſeems to conſider," ſays the Count de Saxe, "that the ſole intention of the drum is to enable the ſoldiers to march with regularity in time and meaſure. From this inadvertency a thouſand diſorders ariſe, which could not take place, if a proper attention was paid to this circumſtance, and the beats of the drum adapted to the particular occurrences. Thus

Thus the ſoldiers will be directed by it to march either quicker or ſlower; they will not drag into ſo long a rear; they will all ſtep out with the ſame foot together; the ranks and files will not be mixed and confuſed; and, what is of infinite importance, the ſoldiers will not endure half the fatigue in marching, that they do at preſent. In ſhort, this would be reviving the ancient military ſtep of the Romans." Here again you would expect to find the Secretary quoted, who, when ſpeaking on this ſubject, expreſſes himſelf preciſely in the following terms: "The infantry ſhould be directed on the march by the colours, and the colours by the ſound of the inſtruments; which, when well regulated, will enable the ſoldiers, if they take the ſtep from it, to preſerve their ranks without difficulty. Hence the ancients made uſe of flutes, fifes, and other muſical inſtruments, which might be brought to a perfect degree of modulation; and it will be as eaſy for an army to march, as for a dancer to move, to the ſound of the muſic. The ancients accordingly varied the ſound, ſo as to correſpond with the different

ferent effects they wanted to produce by it, whether to rouſe and animate, or to calm and allay, the paſſions. All theſe methods," he adds, "ſhould be adopted; but at preſent the inſtruments of military muſic ſerve for no other purpoſe but to make a noiſe."

Thus both are of opinion, that the colours ſhould not be huddled together, as is now the cuſtom; but that each corps ſhould have its peculiar enſign; and that the colours, as well as the ſoldiers themſelves, ſhould all be diſtinguiſhed by ſome particular mark, which would be the means of preventing diſorders and confuſion, that have often diſconcerted the wiſeſt deſigns.

Both the Secretary and the Count would have the army provided with a good quantity of cattle; a Roman cuſtom, and at this day practiſed by the Turks. They both inſiſt much on the army being, as much as poſſible, unincumbered with baggage; which will contribute greatly to the rapidity of its movements, and will facilitate much the moſt arduous enterprifes. It was this that enabled

enabled Julius Cæſar to march his army, in a few days, from their quarters in Aquilea, to the confines of Savoy; whence the ſucceſs of the Helvetic war, as that of the Germanic from having contrived to occupy the important poſt of Beſançon before Arioviſtus. There are many inſtances, in ancient hiſtory, of a rapid march having been the cauſe either of the conqueſt or preſervation of a province: and theſe examples were renewed in modern times by Gaſton de Foix, and the Duke of Alva; as they have been renewed in our own times by the Pruſſian armies, which emulate thoſe of Cæſar in ſobriety, and perſeverance in fatigue. But it appears very extraordinary, that it is not more univerſally the practice among all nations to cut off as much as poſſible what the Romans very juſtly called *impedimenta*. We read in Xenophon, that there were in the camp of Cyrus portable mills, which was an invention far beyond our portable ovens. Both Saxe and Macchiavel inveigh againſt the luxury of our modern armies: one of them, in particular, recommends biſcuit, inſtead of baked bread; and the other, ſimple meal

meal or flour, which the ſoldiers might prepare as they thought proper. It would, in ſhort, be an endleſs work to ſhew in how many points the Count and the Secretary agree exactly, without the former having ſo much as mentioned the name of the latter, who wrote above two hundred years before him.

Tell me, upon your honour, have you never heard the Secretary quoted in thoſe parts where he maintains, that troops ſhould not wait the attack of an enemy in their lines, however ſtrong they be? And what more does Feuquiere or any other of the military writers advance, to prove the defects of this method of fighting, than is advanced by the Secretary? He ſhews the great danger you incur by ſuch a proceeding. The enemy having it in his option on what ſide to attack you, every part muſt be guarded alike; by which your forces come to be divided; and while he aſſaults you with his whole force, you can only defend yourſelf with a part of yours. You may be entirely defeated, if the enemy breaks in; he, being without, can only be repulſed. Therefore

fore it is the moſt adviſeable, though you ſhould be inferior in force, to give battle without your entrenchments.

Will you have any more inſtances of this nature? Of that important chapter of the Chevalier Folard's, intitled, the *Coup-d'œil reduced to Method and Principle*, the fruits of the ſtudy and practice of this great man, in which he recommends hunting and travelling as the moſt effectual means of communicating this talent to a commander; of that chapter, I ſay, you will find the ſubſtance and matter in the following paſſage of the Secretary's PRINCE, part of which, as well as ſome of his diſcourſes on Livy, are connected with his Syſtem of the Art of War. "Peace," ſays he, "is better adapted than a time of war for military exerciſes; which are of two kinds, either active or ſpeculative. With regard to the active part, we ſhould, beſides keeping our armies in diſcipline and training, employ ourſelves frequently in the chaſe; by which we may learn to bear fatigue and hardſhip, and accuſtom ourſelves to obſerve the nature of the country, and the

ſituation of hills, valleys, plains, lakes, and rivers, on which we ſhould beſtow particular attention. This practice is uſeful in two reſpects: firſt, it gives us a knowledge of our own country, and the means of defending it: ſecondly, by accuſtoming ourſelves to mark the particularities of ſituation in our own country, we ſoon acquire a facility in judging of any other, which it may be neceſſary for us to reconnoitre; for the mountains, the plains, the hills, the vallies, and the lakes in Tuſcany, for inſtance, have a certain ſimilitude with thoſe of other provinces: ſo, from the knowledge of one country, we ſoon come to the knowledge of another. Now a chief, whoſe ſkill is defective in this particular, wants one of the firſt qualities of a general; for it is by this that he is taught to find out the enemy, to chuſe his encampments, to conduct his army, to form his line of battle, to inveſt places to the greateſt advantage. It is ſaid of Philopemen, chief of the Acheans, amongſt other remarkable things recorded of him, that in time of peace his thoughts were perpetually employed on war; and when in the

the country with a friend or two, he would often ſtop and reaſon with them in this manner: "If the enemy were on that hill, and we here with our army, which would have the advantage? Which would be the beſt method of advancing towards him in order? What meaſures would it be neceſſary for us to take in order to retreat? If he was to retreat, how ſhould we purſue him?" Thus he propoſed every occurrence that could happen, took their opinion, gave his own, and corroborated it with his reaſons; ſo that by the force of continual reflection and obſervation, when he was at the head of an army, he never found himſelf puzzled in any emergency.

By this time, I think I ſee you moved to the higheſt pitch of rage, through patriotiſm and the love of truth and juſtice. But, I dare ſay, you would give up all patience, if the Military Diſcipline of Mr. De Langeay, whom I mentioned in one of my former letters, was to fall into your hands. This gentleman has not only taken from the Secretary the idea of the Legion, and many other things,

but has even interwoven with his own work whole pages of the *Art of War*; and, in fact, one fourth of his book at leaſt is a mere tranſlation of the Secretary, whom he has not ſo much as done the honour of naming. The learned will furniſh you with many other inſtances of the like eſteem the French ſhew for our authors: but perhaps this is the moſt ſingular, unleſs it ſhould be diſputed by that of a Mr. Villars, who not long ſince publiſhed a tract, entitled, *Préceptes de Politique & d'Etat*. Like a good ſubject, he inſcribed it to the King and Queen, as a work that might be of ſervice to their government, as the fruit of his meditations in viſiting the countries and contemplating the manners of the different European nations. And what do you ſuppoſe all this was really the fruit of? Of his knowledge of our language. For the whole book, three diſcourſes relating to the affairs of Venice being purpoſely omitted, is neither more nor leſs than a tranſlation, chapter for chapter, and word for word, of the Political Diſcourſes of our celebrated Paruta, which had

had juſt before made their appearance in the world.

If writers, however, have not given themſelves the pains to quote the Secretary, it appears, that the moſt illuſtrious generals have taken care to ſtudy and to obſerve his precepts. Beſide the proofs which I have already produced, I ſhall ſend you a few more by the next poſt.

Villa, July 20, 1759.

LETTER XXIV.

On the Inferiority of the Italians to the other Nations of Europe in the Art of War. The beſt Method of defending a Country that is invaded by an Enemy.

YOU ſee I have not forgot my promiſe. I muſt confeſs, that I have very much at heart the honour of my country, which ſeems more devoted to Pallas with the olive-branch, than with the reſted lance. To ſpeak without a metaphor, it appears that our countrymen

men have more to boaſt of from their progreſs in the fine arts, than from their warlike atchievements. For the latter, genius alone is not ſufficient; a number of concurrent circumſtances, in the temper of the times, the qualities of Princes, and fortune of the people, are requiſite to get them a name for military proweſs. If in compariſon with the neighbouring nations the Italians have done but little with the ſword, yet they have not been idle in military matters with the pen; and perhaps they may be ſaid to have taught that ſcience to other nations. You ſurely know, that Marchi was Vauban's maſter; that the parallels at ſieges were invented by the Italians, who were in former times the military architects of all Europe. The famous citadel of Antwerp was the conſtruction of Paciotti di Urbino; the fortreſs of Spandaw in Brandenbourg, and that of Cuſtrin, which the Ruſſians beſieged laſt year, and near which was fought the great battle of Zorndorff, were planned by a Franceſco Giramella, who, towards the end of the fifteenth century, was in the ſervice of John George, the Elector.

Italy

Italy abounds with good military authors, amongſt whom may be reckoned the Secretary. Beſides what he has written in his Art of War, he touches very often on the ſame ſubject in his Diſcourſes on the Decads of Livy; where he conſiders the means, partly civil, partly religious, and partly military, through which the Romans attained the empire of the world. In his obſervations on the twenty-third chapter of the firſt book, he conſiders the following queſtion: When in a country ſurrounded by mountains, an enemy comes in force to invade you, whether the paſſes are to be defended or not? If there be only one paſſage, through which the enemy can enter, and in which you can ſubſiſt your whole force, then, he ſays, you ſhould defend it. But if the place be inhoſpitable and barren, ſo that you cannot maintain your whole army in it; or if there are other paſſes, which muſt be known to the peaſants, who can give information of them to the enemy; in thoſe caſes, he ſays, it would be the extreme of bad policy to wait for the enemy, and defend the paſs: for it will be an eaſy matter for him to

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ſurround you, and prevent you from putting the valour of your people to the teſt: the loſs of the paſs, in which you placed ſo much confidence, will cauſe diſmay among your ſoldiers, and you will riſk every thing with an inconſiderable part of your army. You ſhould meet the enemy then without the mountains, or wait his coming, within, in a ſituation more commodious. Thus did the Romans, he adds, wait for Hannibal, firſt on the Teſino, after he had paſſed the Alps, and next in the plain of Arezzo, after he had croſſed the Apennines; and they rather choſe that their army ſhould periſh by the hands of the enemy, in a place where they had at leaſt a chance of conquering, than to march it acroſs the mountains to periſh with hunger and want.

Not long after, an occaſion was afforded of judging whether Macchiavel was right or not in his deciſion of the queſtion. Charles the Fifth, having in 1536 made himſelf maſter of Piedmont, threatened to enter with a large army into Provence, which you know is ſurrounded

ſounded by the Alps, and to drive Francis the Firſt out of his kingdom. The conſtable Montmorency, who was appointed to the defence of the province, would not attempt to defend the paſs of the mountains againſt Charles, though extremely narrow, intricate, and well fortified by nature. Having ſecured all the proviſions he could, and deſtroyed what he could not ſecure, he abandoned the mountains, and retired into a ſtrong camp at Avignon, in a fertile and pleaſant country, to wait there for the reenforcements that might be ſent to join him, and the enemy, who threatened to attack him. Every one knows the unfortunate iſſue of that enterpriſe to the German arms; an enterpriſe in which Charles had been ſo ſure of ſucceeding, that he warned his hiſtoriographer to lay in a good ſtock of ink and paper, and ſaid he would take care to furniſh him with matter enough to employ it.

But notwithſtanding the Emperor was obliged to return with diſgrace and loſs, perſons were not wanting to criticiſe on Montmorency's conduct, and to blame

him who had been the ſaviour of his country. They aſſerted, that he ſhould have taken poſt on the mountains, and defended the paſs againſt the Germans, where five hundred men were in a capacity to keep at bay ten thouſand, and where a handful of French might have checked the progreſs of Charles the Fifth's whole army: that, when matters were come to the laſt extremity, it was ſtill time enough to retire to Avignon, if his deſign was to fortify himſelf there; and that, acting in this manner, he would in reality have defended Provence, and not have ruined it. In oppoſition to theſe people, M. De Langeay takes upon himſelf to defend the Conſtable, in his book of Military Diſcipline; where he ſhews the reaſons that induced the Conſtable to act in the manner he had done. And what reaſons do you imagine he adduces? The very ſame with thoſe which the Secretary gives in the diſcuſſion of the above queſtion; as if he had foreſeen the invaſion of Provence by Charles the Fifth. Theſe very arguments, I ſay, M. De Langeay ingrafts in his book, tranſlating them word for word into his own language.

What

What redounds ſtill more to the Secretary's credit, is, that the fortifications of the Conſtable's camp near Avignon, were after the very model of thoſe which he lays down in his book on the Art of War. They were a perfect novelty at that time in France; and were in the iſſue as much celebrated by the French writers, as the machines and towers of Julius Cæſar had been admired by the Gauls.

But the Secretary has ſtill further cauſe to glory, in the teſtimony of the King of Pruſſia's conduct, when in 1745 the Auſtrian army threatened to invade Sileſia. He waited their approach, as you well remember, on the other ſide of the mountains which divide that province from Bohemia; and in the plains of Strigaw gave them that complete rout, which has been the moſt memorable in our time, unleſs we except that which he gave them afterwards at Liſſa, in the ſame province; which two actions may deſervedly be called the Hochſtet and Turin of the preſent war.

Villa, July 24, 1759.

LETTER XXV.

On the Battle of Molwitz. The Order of March of Count Munich in the Deſerts of Ucrania.

IT gives you infinite ſatisfaction, you ſay, to behold the Secretary in the council of Montmorency, and ſtill more in that of the King of Pruſſia. You think you ſee him in his black gown, amidſt thoſe blue uniforms, anſwering in pure Tuſcan to a language fit only for a horſe. Perhaps you will alſo imagine, that you ſee him in the act of mending his pen, in order to write the hiſtory of that great Prince. He certainly would have written it much better than Pufendorff did that of the Grand Elector.

Now, ſince you are ſo well pleaſed to ſee the Secretary in the council of war, behold him alſo at Molwitz, in the firſt action that happened between the Pruſſians and the Auſtrians, where it was his order

order of battle that gained the victory. You remember how the Pruſſian cavalry, which were then few in number, and not diſciplined to the perfection they are at preſent, were beaten and diſperſed by the Auſtrian horſe, a great part of whom wheeled about to take the Pruſſian infantry in flank. This would have decided the fortune of that day, if they had not been protected by ſome battalions, which were poſted on the flank; the very order of battle which Macchiavel recommends to ſecure yourſelf from the enemy's horſe, when ſuperior to yours, or when your horſe are beaten out of the field. This it was that occaſioned a victory, by which Brandenbourg was preſerved, and Sileſia conquered, and by which the Pruſſians aſſumed ſuch vigour, as to make war for ſome years back, and to keep the field againſt the greateſt part of Europe, and a conſiderable part of Aſia.

Let us follow the Secretary, if you pleaſe, a little farther northward, when he goes to adviſe the celebrated Count Munich in his operations againſt the Tar-

Tartars. That general had to croſs the immenſe deſerts that lie between Uerania and Crimea, with proviſions, and every other neceſſary for his army; and had to do with enemies, who are all mounted, and ſcour the country with an incredible velocity, attacking you now on the flank, now in front, now in the rear, ſometimes on two ſides at once, and never allowing you a moment's reſpite. What meaſures did the Count adopt in the proſecution of this difficult enterpriſe? Preciſely ſuch as are recommended in ſimilar caſes by the Secretary. He moved his whole army in a ſquare, always prepared either for marching or fighting. In the hollow of the ſquare he placed the carriages and the bagagge; along the flanks, in the front and in the rear, he extended the pikes, the better to ſuſtain the onſet of the Tartarian cavalry, and the artillery to diſperſe them. On the angles of the ſquare he poſted, firſt the heavy, then the light-armed, horſemen; the latter of whom were frequently ſent on before to reconnoitre the country, and bring intelligence of the enemy. All he added beſides was

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ſome *chevaux-de-friſe*, which he took along with him to ſerve as a kind of temporary entrenchment. Now, what the Secretary had foretold, really happened to Count Munich: the Tartars made frequent irruptions and deſultory attacks, with a confuſed noiſe and clamour, but could not make the ſmalleſt impreſſion on his ſquare; like a number of little dogs barking around a maſtiff.

But you ſhould not be ſatisfied with ſeeing the Secretary in a council of war; you ſhould go and ſee him at the head of his own army: for he has given battles, where, if he run no perſonal riſk, he has at leaſt had an opportunity of ſeeing his doctrines put in practice.

Villa, July 27, 1759.

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LETTER XXVI.

On the Life of Caſtruccio Caſtracani of Lucca.

AMONGST the *opuſcula* of the Secretary, the moſt conſiderable is the Life of Caſtruccio Caſtracani; who ſignalized himſelf for his valour, about the time that Dante recalled the Muſes into Italy: and, as this latter gave a new life to poetry, ſo did Caſtruccio to the military art. Of the loweſt extraction, he raiſed himſelf by his perſonal merit alone to the dominion of Lucca, of Lunigiana, of part of the Riviere of Genoa, and afterwards of Piſa and Piſtoja; and, if death had not put a ſtop to his career, after he had juſt brought to a ſucceſsful iſſue a moſt important enterpriſe againſt the Florentines, he would in the end have made himſelf maſter of all Tuſcany. Critics will have it, that he took the thread only from real hiſtory, the texture being entirely his own; and that, in imitation

imitation of Xenophon's Cyropædia, he wiſhed to exhibit Caſtruccio to the world, as a model of civil and military conduct. That this was really the caſe, may be inferred from ſome expreſſions of the ancients, which he puts into the mouth of Caſtruccio; and in particular from the variation that is obſervable between the facts he lays down in the *Life*, and thoſe which he has related of him in the Hiſtory of Florence. In the former he gives free ſcope to his imagination; whereas in the latter he follows the authority of Villani, a contemporary author; who nevertheleſs repreſents Caſtruccio to have been magnanimous, prudent, dextrous, diligent, indefatigable, brave and at the ſame time cool in battle, and extremely fortunate in his enterpriſes. Such in fact does he ſhew himſelf in all his actions. That might be truly called a deſign worthy of a Cæſar, which he had formed, of throwing a dam acroſs the ſtreights of the Golfoline rock, that he might make himſelf maſter of the city of Florence, by cauſing the waters of the Arno to overflow it. He ſhewed prodigious ingenuity in the ſiege of Piſtoja, a

little before his death; having made uſe of ſeveral curious machines, particularly the wooden tower of the ancients, and fortified his camp in a moſt admirable manner againſt the town, and ſtill more ſo againſt the Florentines, who attempted in vain to relieve it: ſo that nothing can be richer than this piece of embroidery, as we may call it, wrought by the Secretary.

Three battles were given by Caſtruccio, which were embelliſhed, if not entirely planned, by Macchiavel; who ſeems in his relation of them to be fond of ſhewing his military knowledge. The firſt was at Mount Carlo, not far from Peſcia, when Caſtruccio ſerved under Uguccione della Faggiuola, who commanded the combined forces of the Piſans and Luccheſe againſt the Florentines. Illneſs having obliged Uguccione to leave the camp, the enemy took courage, thinking they could eaſily beat an army without a commander. They accordingly marched out, and offered battle every day, eager to come to action, and in their own minds ſure of gaining the victory.

victory. Caſtruccio did all in his power to confirm them in this opinion, ſhewing every ſign of fear, and not ſuffering any one to go without the entrenchments. At length, having learnt the diſpoſition of the Florentines, who placed the flower of their troops in the center, and the weaker upon the flanks, he ſallied out, forming his army in an oppoſite order; and having ordered his center to move ſlow, whilſt the wings advanced rapidly, the beſt of his troops came to engage the worſt of the enemy's; by which manœuvre he obtained the victory.

The next battle was fought upon the hill of Serravalle, which lies at the end of the vale of Nievole, between Peſcia and Piſtoja. The Luccheſe were encamped on one ſide of the hill, and the Florentines on the other. It was Caſtruccio's intention to engage the enemy in this narrow paſs; where his troops could not, before the action ſhould begin, diſcover their number, and would have the advantage of the ground. The night before the battle, he took the precaution of occupying ſecretly the caſtle of Ser-

ravalle, which was ſituated at the top of the hill, at a little diſtance from the road; and in that war obſerved a perfect neutrality. This done, he puts his army in motion betimes in the morning; and about break of day, his infantry falls in with the cavalry of the advanced guard of the Florentine army, who were aſcending the hill on the other ſide, with little expectation of meeting Caſtruccio. The advantage he had of attacking the Florentines unexpectedly, and of flanking them from the caſtle, gained him the battle.

The third victory which he obtained over the ſame enemy, was no leſs ſignal. They were encamped at St. Miniato, on the left ſide of the Arno, about thirty miles from Piſa. Having ſecured Piſa with a ſtrong garriſon, Caſtruccio pitched his camp at Fucecchio, on the other ſide of the river; a ſtrong and commodious poſition. He kept at a little diſtance from the Arno, in order to encourage the Florentines to paſs it. His deſign ſucceeded: and no ſooner had they begun one morning to ford it with a part of their

their army, than Caſtruccio, having divided his forces into two lines, fell upon them with the firſt. The fight was obſtinate; Caſtruccio being inferior in force, but with the advantage of engaging troops who were in diſorder: for the Florentines, not having all croſſed the river, had not time to form their line of battle. Meanwhile he detaches two corps of infantry, one higher up, and the other lower down the river, to prevent the enemy from paſſing it, in order to take him in flank. The fortune of the day ſtill remained in ſuſpenſe, the Florentines making a vigorous defence againſt the troops of Caſtruccio, as faſt as they gained the bank. Caſtruccio then ordered his ſecond line to relieve the firſt; which, being compoſed of freſh troops, ſoon broke the Florentines, who were nearly exhauſted, and drove them into the river. That part of the Florentine cavalry, which had hitherto remained unbroken, was obliged to give way, when attacked at once by Caſtruccio's cavalry, and by his infantry, which had no longer any of the Florentine infantry to oppoſe them.

With

With ſuch ſkill and dexterity does Caſtruccio fight his battles, according to the Secretary's account of them. If his relations are not true, we muſt allow them at leaſt to be plauſible; and they may perhaps induce us to think with Ariſtotle, that fiction is more inſtructive than hiſtory.

Villa, Auguſt 2, 1759.

LETTER XXVII.

On the Jealouſy of certain Military Men, on account of Macchiavel's Knowledge in the Art of War.

THUS it is. Notwithſtanding Macchiavel's Diſcourſes on Livy, his Art of War, and Life of Caſtruccio, have been ſo often re-printed, and tranſlated into ſo many languages; notwithſtanding all the proofs he has given of his ſkill in the art, yet they will not allow him any merit as a military author.

This

This they are ſo fixed and determined on, that nothing could induce them to alter their opinion. Aſk them, if they have diſcovered any error, any blunder or abſurdity, in this or that particular of the Art of War, they will anſwer you coldly, that no man of the robe can know any thing of the matter. This is the only reaſon you will get from them. Amongſt the abſurd criticiſms of this kind, which I have met with, I muſt confeſs two in particular have ſurpriſed me, as coming from perſons who were ſuppoſed to be a little better informed than the common run of mankind.

One of the perſons I allude to is Brantôme, a French gentleman of ſome literature, who lived about the latter end of the ſixteenth century, and wrote memoirs of his own life, which are well known in the world. What a difference, ſays he, between Mr. De Langeay and the Florentine Secretary! the Treatiſe of the former on the Art of War, ſhews what an excellent officer he was; that of the latter only ſerves to make the author an object of ridicule. A great piece of folly,

folly, we muſt indeed acknowledge it to have been in that man, to compoſe a volume on a ſubject that he was totally unacquainted with; as if a philoſopher was to write a treatiſe on hunting. Now you, who know that the greateſt part of Mr. De Langeay's book is tranſlated word for word from the other, will eaſily judge of the candour and ſolidity of this obſervation.

The other perſon I allude to is the celebrated Folard. In his Commentary on Polybius, he takes an opportunity of paſſing a very handſome encomium on the Secretary. He calls the diſcourſes on Livy an immortal work, the Life of Caſtruccio an admirable performance; in both which, he ſays, the author has reaſoned as well on military affairs, as could be done by the moſt intelligent perſon of the profeſſion: in ſhort, he concludes, that he is excellent in every thing, except in the book which he has written expreſsly on the art of war, which he calls a ſorry tranſlation of Vegetius. Now, who would have expected ſuch a concluſion as this? Is there not in all the works

works of the Secretary a perfect unity and conformity of thinking, as well as writing? Do we not find in that book all the fundamental maxims of war, relating to tactics, to battles, to encampments; a great part of which are exactly the same with those in the Commentaries of Folard? Did he not intend this book as a continuation, or more ample explanation, of what had before dropped from his pen on military subjects? as a proof of which, he often refers to particular passages in his Discourses. What are we to think then of this fine conclusion of Folard's? We may perhaps have reason to conjecture, that the Chevalier Folard, brigadier-general in the French army, did not feel himself at all hurt at the military observations which might have dropped, as it were by accident, from the Secretary of the republic of Florence; but could not bear to see the very same things laid down by him afterwards in the form of precept.

Such jealousy do men shew, when they think any one else incroaches upon their property. It was this same principle

that urged ſome of the litterati of his time to charge him with a deficiency of learning. Becauſe he did not enroll himſelf in their ſociety, becauſe he did not carry any badge about him, or make any oſtentation of erudition, by writing in Latin, which language was then eſteemed the ſole criterion of knowledge, they would not allow him to be called a man of letters; and particularly as the grammarians and pedants, with whom Italy then abounded, muſt of courſe have been his ſworn enemies.

Ei dice coſe, e voi dite parole. *

At the head of this confederacy was Paulus Jovius, who, at the ſame time that he highly extolled the Secretary for his genius, would have it, that he had little or no knowledge of Latin, and that his friend Marcellus Virgilius, by his own confeſſion, had furniſhed him with the flowers of the Greek and Latin languages, which he had inſerted in his works. Now, by theſe flowers, Jovius meant

* He treated of things, they of words.

meant the examples and authorities of the ancient authors, with which the Secretary corroborated his own opinions. I remember how in England ſomething of the kind was aſſerted of Pope, that his friend Bolingbroke had furniſhed the materials for that philoſophical poem of his, called the ESSAY ON MAN. And that this was not far from the truth, they ſaid, might be obſerved by any one who read the poem itſelf. The want of coherence or connexion between the various parts of it made it evident, ſaid they, that it did not all flow from the ſame vein; but that the philoſopher and the poet were two different perſons. But the preſent caſe is far from being appoſite; and to ſay, that any other perſon furniſhed the Secretary with his examples, would be the ſame thing as to aſſert, that ſome other perſon had helped Sir Iſaac Newton to his experiments on the priſm. His Diſcourſes are by no means a mere collection of examples, a garden of flowers, like Valturio's book on the art of war, and others, even of reputation, in various ſciences. Every thing is there connected; the continuity

is perfect; he narrates and reaſons at the ſame time; and the concluſions ſpring out of the facts, as the branches of a tree out of the trunk. His correct and animated ſtyle of writing ſhews evidently that he was not only himſelf perfectly acquainted with the ancient authors, but that he had thoroughly digeſted them, and adopted their beauties.

I will not diſpute, but that he might have acquired ſome helps from his friend Marcellus, as he himſelf frankly acknowledged; *ingenui pudoris eſt fateri per quos profeceris.* But this I will be bold to ſay, that we muſt rely very little on the authority of Jovius. Allowing that among the prolix triflers of his age he held a diſtinguiſhed rank, yet every one knows his character as an hiſtorian: a proſtituted hireling, who went about raiſing contributions at the courts of the different Princes; and, if he had not the hardened front of Aretin, it was not through want of inclination. Even when a truth happened to eſcape him, his reputation was ſo well eſtabliſhed, that nobody believed him.

Villa, Auguſt 5, 1759.

LET-

LETTER XXVIII.

On the Superiority of the close Method of fighting, recommended by Machiavel.

WHAT Cicero writes of Lucullus is certainly, as you obſerve, not inapplicable to the Secretary; that, having paſſed his youth in civil employments, though he left Rome quite ignorant of war, yet, by mere dint of reading and converſation, he arrived in Aſia an accompliſhed general: and the more ſo, becauſe, as the glory of Lucullus was principally eclipſed through the malice of his ſucceſſor in the Aſiatic war, ſo likewiſe was that of the Secretary through the envy of ſucceeding writers. He will, nevertheleſs, be always held in eſtimation by perſons of diſcernment. Such will take a pleaſure in obſerving how his genius has broke through every reſtraint, and how he has penetrated, as I before obſerved, almoſt intuitively into this ſcience. He aſcends to the firſt principles of the art; firſt eſtabliſhing wiſe regulations,

tions, then improving them by continual exerciſes: he enters ſo minutely into every particular of diſcipline and military juriſprudence, as to ſhew his profound knowledge of the human heart: and, as he laid it down for a maxim, that, to preſerve the conſtitution of civil government, we ſhould recur at times to its fundamental principles, ſo he thought the ſame maxim held good in military inſtitutions. War being eſtabliſhed on violence, he wiſhed to make it more deciſive, and to bring it back to that vigour, from which it had degenerated too much. A little before his time an engagement happened at Caſtracaro, between the Florentines and the Venetians, in which, though it laſted half a day, not a man was killed, but only a few horſes wounded; ſo feebly were wars then carried on, that, as he obſerved, they were entered upon without apprehenſion, continued without danger, and finiſhed without loſs. All his regulations are, on the contrary, intended to bring armies to cloſe action; whence the fight may become more vigorous, and the event more deciſive. This ever was the method of

thoſe

thoſe nations who have been the moſt remarkable for their ſkill in war. If we look back into ancient times, we ſhall find that Homer, who may be called a profeſſor of the art, makes light of thoſe people who fought at a diſtance with the bow; and, on the other hand, highly extols thoſe who, armed with the pike, dared to approach their enemy, and look him in the face. You may remember how Idomeneus, whoſe dexterity in the management of the ſpear got him the epithet of δυρίκλυτος, would have been offended to be taken for one of the crowd of archers:

——— ὐ γὰρ οἰὼ
Ἀνδρῶν δυσμενέων ἐκὰς ἱσταμένους πολεμίζειν.

The order introduced by Cyrus among the Perſians, when he had it in view to make himſelf maſter of Aſia, was to lay aſide the ſling and the bow, and to arm his people with the cuiraſs, the ſhield, and the ſcimitar, that they might come to cloſe action with the enemy: for it was his idea, that all the ſlingers in the world

world could not withſtand a body of men armed in that manner:

Enſis habet vires, et gens quæcunque virorum eſt
Bella gerit gladiis ——

LUCAN.

The Greeks and Romans had both light and heavy armed troops, of which the latter were intended for cloſe action, the former to engage at a diſtance.

But after the archers, or *velites*, who preceded the main body of the army, had made a diſcharge or two, they commonly retired to ſome eminence, or went into the rear, through the intervals of the cohorts, either of the legion or the phalanx, to whom they left the deciſion of the battle. At preſent the light and heavy armour are united in the ſame man, who, in making uſe of the firelock, correſponds to the light-armed ſoldier, and to the heavy-armed in uſing the bayonet, which is always fixed to the barrel of the firelock. It ſeldom happens, however, that the bayonet is tried, moſt modern battles being decided by firing. Nay, an army, after engaging for a whole

a whole day in this manner, has been known to retire (it might be ſaid almoſt) without having ſeen the enemy. The Secretary's method is very different, and is wonderfully conformable to the precepts of Montecucculi, who keeps the field among the modern authors on the art of war. In the very beginning of his Memoirs are theſe preciſe words, which might even ſerve as a comment upon Machiavel: "The intention of all offenſive arms is to attack the enemy, and batter him inceſſantly from the moment he is diſcovered, till he is entirely routed and driven out of the field: the nearer he approaches, the more violent ſhould be the attack, firſt from the cannon, then from the muſketry, and in ſucceſſion, from the carabines, the piſtols, the pikes, the ſwords, and, at laſt, the ſhock itſelf of the troops." In a word, the Secretary would have engagements ſhort and deciſive, like the battles and the wars of the Romans, thoſe conquerors of the world.

I embrace you, the only way now in my power at a diſtance, and am, &c.

Villa, Auguſt 9, 1759.

LETTER XXIX.

On the Artillery.

I ALLOW the artillery to be very reſpectable. You have heard of that famous general who uſed to ſtoop as often as he ſaw a flaſh of the enemy's guns, ſaying, a cannon-ſhot well deſerved a bow. The immenſe train of artillery which Charles the Eighth brought along with him to the invaſion of Naples, ſtruck no ſmall aſtoniſhment into the minds of the Italians, who had never before ſeen any thing to be compared to it; and at the battle of Fornova terrified even the Stradiots, who were reckoned the beſt ſoldiers in Italy. The irreſiſtible fury and prodigious effect of the cannon became the univerſal topic of converſation. They called to mind the victory which the artillery had given to the Venetians over the Genoeſe, at the battle of Chioggia; the advantage which it gave the Grand Signior over the Soldan and the Sophy, and the conqueſt of the

the New World, which was principally effected by means of the cannon. From theſe circumſtances artillery roſe into wonderful reputation; and people began to think that it had entirely put a ſtop to cloſe fighting, and that the whole ſtreſs of war would thenceforward reſt upon it: ſo that the ſame thing ſeemed likely to take place with reſpect to the fire-arms in war, as did with algebra in the mathematics, when it was endeavoured to explode all geometrical proof, and bring every thing to the teſt of calculation.

The Secretary was the firſt that ventured to raiſe his voice againſt the artillery. He ſhewed, in oppoſition to the received opinion, that it did not contribute ſo much to the gaining of a battle; and, notwithſtanding its violence, that the ancient method of fighting might ſtill be put in practice. He reſolved alſo that very queſtion which you now put to me. You may remember, that in his order of battle the fuſileers and light cavalry are poſted in each wing. Theſe he ſuppoſes to begin the fight, and

to aſſail and attempt to poſſeſs themſelves of the enemy's cannon. When attacked, the enemy muſt either abandon them, and they are taken; or, if he means to protect them, he muſt leave them behind him, and they become uſeleſs. There cannot then be a better precaution taken, than to run up and ſeize them before there is time for them to do much execution: and if this is done, not cautiouſly nor partially, but at once with vigour and reſolution, the cannon will not be found formidable enough to repel the attack. Thoſe who might be inclined to object to this plan, on account of the lives that would be loſt in the execution of it, ſhould conſider, that war cannot be carried on without bloodſhed, and that it is a general, and not a particular loſs that muſt be avoided by a commander. Beſides which, the fire of the cannon is not always attended with ſuch terrible effects as are commonly imagined: many ſhots are thrown away in the air, others loſt upon the ground; and every little riſe or inequality in the ſurface of the earth, affords a ſhelter againſt them. It is by ſuch conſidera-

tions

tions as theſe that the ſoldiers ſhould be induced to make light of the cannon, rather than by the method ſuggeſted by a certain author about the time they firſt came into faſhion. He gravely preſcribes, as a remedy againſt the terrors of the artillery, that the ſoldiers ears be filled with cotton, and covered with wax; the precaution which Ulyſſes took againſt the bewitching ſongs of the Syrens. In fine, to lay aſide jeſting on ſo ſerious a ſubject, it was the novelty of the fire-arms, and the extraordinary noiſe of their diſcharge, rather than the effects of them, that were the occaſion of thoſe victories which are ſo much talked of; and if men do not at preſent give ſuch proofs of perſonal valour, as they formerly did, it is not to be attributed to the invention of fire-arms, but to the evil inſtitutions and weak principles that have crept into our military ſyſtem.

We may adduce, as a proof of this, the cuſtom of the Romans, who came as ſoon as poſſible to cloſe action, notwithſtanding they had machines which anſwered to our artillery. But their armies

mies were compoſed of the flower of the Roman youth, who ſerved an apprentice-ſhip to the profeſſion. Being from the time of enrollment reſtrained from bad courſes by the ſevereſt penalties, and the obligation of an oath, and incited to noble actions by great rewards, and by a national point of honour, they were inſpired with that confidence which proceeds from a conſciouſneſs of ſuperiority, and that obſtinate valour which generally confers the victory: whereas our numerous armies are for the moſt part compoſed of the dregs of the people; of ſtriplings not yet arrived to their full ſtrength or courage; of deſerters, in whom vices have taken root, that are a diſgrace to the name of ſoldiers. What then was the method of fighting beſt calculated for the Roman armies? To charge the enemy at once, and not to keep trifling at a diſtance with their miſſile weapons, and their machines, as Veſpaſian did againſt the ſallies of the Jews at Jotapata, whom he wiſhed to reduce only by famine. And what ſhould be our method? What an intelligent French author

author * lays down, and is really practiſed: truſt nothing to the valour of the ſoldiers, but depend entirely on the diſcharge of the fire-arms.

I know not whether you will allow what I have ſaid to have any weight againſt the final argument, the *ratio ultima*, of princes; but this I know, that it is impoſſible for me to expreſs how much I am, &c.

Villa, Auguſt 13, 1759.

* Le Comte de Beauſobre, Tableau Militaire des Grecs, Tom. ii. Art. 20.

LET-

LETTER XXX.

On the Military Machines of the Ancients, and the Uſe they made of them.

I HAVE for ſome days delayed anſwering your laſt letter; in order to which, I found it requiſite to ſend a meſſenger to town, and to wait for his return. You queſtion me on two particulars; on the force of the military engines of the ancients, and the uſe which they made of them in war. Of their force you have a very ſlight idea: and you imagine the only uſe of them was to defend the camp. You think therefore that argument will not hold good, by which I deduced the expediency of adopting the ancient method of fighting, from the ancients themſelves having had machines which anſwered to our artillery. You think no compariſon can be made between the *catapultæ* and *baliſtæ* of the Romans, and the artillery of the moderns; and that the prodigious force and efficacy of the fire-

fire-arms have effected, if not an entire, yet at leaſt a very conſiderable change in the art of war. To clear up your doubts, I conſidered that I muſt not truſt to conjecture alone, but muſt proceed upon certain and inconteſtable authority; and having formerly, in the courſe of my reading, made ſome extracts to this purpoſe, I ſent for the collection. And now, armed with theſe authorities, I am ready to anſwer your objections.

With regard to the force of the military engines of the ancients, I ſhall not inſiſt on the authority of the poets, who repreſent them in different paſſages to have been ſo dreadful. You would have good reaſon to decline ſuch authority; and I myſelf conſider the poets as the *velites*, or light-armed troops, who have but a ſmall ſhare in the action. But the beſt hiſtorians, and the moſt reſpectable writers among the ancients, expreſsly and uniformly confirm the ſlaughter and deſtruction which the *catapultæ* and *baliſtæ* brought with them. Nor can any thinking perſon entertain a doubt of the violence of machines conſtructed to an-

noy troops ſo well protected by defenſive armour, to batter walls founded by nations, who built them to laſt for ever. The effects of their machines were ſpoken of juſt in the ſame terms as thoſe of our cannon are; and the ſame complaints were made at the invention of them.

Non più la gagliardia, non più l'ardire,
Per te può in campo al paragon venire, *

ſays Arioſto, repeating what was in every one's mouth at that time. In the ſame manner Archidamas, the ſon of Ageſilaus, on ſeeing the *catapulta* juſt arrived from Italy, exclaimed, "By heaven! it is all over with perſonal valour." The truth is, that thoſe machines made a moſt dreadful havock, and went off with a moſt terrible exploſion, oftener, and with more certainty of hitting their object, than the ſhots of our artillery. The ſame may be obſerved with regard to the ſuperiority of the croſs-bow over the arquebuſe: for which reaſon M. De Langeay was of opinion, that we ſhould ſtill retain

* You *(ſpeaking to the cannon)* have left no room for the diſplay of courage or valour.

retain the croſs-bow, an arm that was not entirely out of uſe in the fifteenth century.

Theſe machines threw to a conſiderable diſtance ſtones of an incredible weight, infinitely beyond that of the balls even of the Turkiſh artillery: the only reſource they had to deaden their violence, were ſacks of wool, which are uſed to this day againſt the cannon. They diſmantled the large towers, and deſtroyed the merlons of the walls; nay, they even battered down the towers themſelves, which were the principal defence of cities. Vegetius ſays nothing could withſtand them; like lightning they carried all before them; inſomuch that there have been perſons, well ſkilled in the art of war, who were for re-eſtabliſhing the uſe of the *baliſta*, which they thought would anſwer the ſame dreadful purpoſe as the cannon, and be at the ſame time more eaſily conſtructed and tranſported from one place to another. This was the opinion of Folard, who made experiments on ſome machines in miniature, after the model of the an-

cients; and of Count Saxe, as I myſelf heard from his own mouth, who had dedicated the greateſt part of a life crowned with glory to the ſtudy of his profeſſion.

Do you think I have ſufficiently proved the firſt part of my theſis, to ſpeak in the uſual ſtyle; and, after what you have heard, would you be above bowing to a ſhot from a *catapulta* or *baliſta?* With regard to the ſecond part of my ſubject, that is, the uſe which the ancients made of theſe machines in war, we are informed by Monticucculi, a man who was no leſs eminent in letters than in arms, that among the Spartans and Macedonians, the machines that anſwered to our artillery were diſtributed between the ſeveral diviſions of the phalanx. I cannot, for my own part, recollect any other example of this kind, but that of Maccanidas, tyrant of Sparta, who, when marching towards Mantinea againſt Philopemen, took a large train of machines along with him; which in the engagement he placed in the intervals along the front of his army, in the ſame manner

as

as our field-pieces are diſpoſed of. But, with regard to the Roman armies, we find in Vegetius, that each cohort in the legion was provided with an *onagrum*, or a *baliſta*, and each century with a *carro-baliſta*, or a *catapulta*, as our battalions are with their field-pieces. The *carro-baliſta* was drawn by mules; and eleven men were aſſigned to load and point it. He informs us, that it was not only uſeful in defending the camp, but alſo in annoying the enemy in the field. Theſe machines were, according to the ſame author, placed behind the heavy-armed troops, over whoſe heads they made their diſcharge upon the enemy: their ſituation was however changed, when circumſtances of ground and poſition required it. They were ſometimes placed on an eminence, whence they might command the country, and do the more execution, as was done in the battle between Vitellius and Otho, which decided their diſpute for the imperial throne. On other occaſions they were placed in redoubts, on the wings of the army, to protect the flanks from an enemy ſuperior in number; of which Julius Cæſar afforded

afforded an inſtance in Gaul. Having taken poſſeſſion of a gentle eminence, with a multitude of Gauls in front, who might eaſily ſurround him, he cauſed trenches to be made in an oblique direction on the right and left of his army, and a fortreſs to be erected, where he placed the machines: then, his flanks being ſecured, he offered battle to the Gauls, who declined it. We find alſo the machines poſted on the flanks, on two riſing grounds, by Arrian, and part of them behind the legions, which were between the two riſing grounds, when he had to defend, againſt a great number of the Alani, the province of Cappadocia, to the government of which he had been appointed by Adrian. The *catapultæ* and *baliſtæ* were thus diſpoſed of, in the ſame manner with our artillery, as the commander judged expedient, or as the ſituation required it; and particularly in thoſe parts whence they might do the moſt execution, and be the leaſt liable to inſult. The large ſtones that were diſcharged by them, put the enemy in diſorder, ſwept away whole files of men, and wrought the moſt dreadful car-

carnage and deſtruction. The only method to prevent their terrible effects, was either to cloſe in, and not give them time to do miſchief, as Philopemen did with Maccanidas, or to ſurround and cut them off: and, as we now often hear of the enemy's cannon being taken or ſpiked, ſo among the ancients were ſallies frequently made to cut the ropes, or deſtroy the ſprings of the machines.

Not only in field engagements, but in all the other operations of war, the ancients made the ſame uſe of their machines, as we do of our cannon. With them they formed batteries, to impede and deſtroy the enemy's works, and to defend their own; ſo that they might be ſaid in a manner to *cannonade* one another. With them they battered their adverſaries at a diſtance, harraſſed their watering and foraging parties, and reduced them to the greateſt miſery and diſtreſs. When they wanted to gain an eminence or a bank occupied by the enemy, they firſt threw a ſhower of ſtones from their ſlings, and their machines, which, when well

well pointed, carried every thing before them.

They battered likewiſe, on ſome occaſions, the enemy's camp with their machines, as we do with our cannon. This method of proceeding, Pompeius Sabinus adopted againſt the Thracians: having ſurrounded them with an entrenchment, he erected a redoubt, whence he poured upon them a continual diſcharge of ſtones, darts, and fire.

Nor were the machines unemployed in the paſſing of rivers. On the bank of the river which was to be croſſed, they raiſed batteries of *catapultæ* and *baliſtæ*, with which they kept the enemy at a diſtance, whilſt they were conſtructing the bridge. It was in this manner that Germanicus croſſed the Eder; and the ſame method was practiſed by Alexander in Thrace. When the river was large, they launched veſſels, on which they built towers, and placed the machines in them, to diſorder the enemy on the other ſide, who was alſo provided with machines to prevent the paſſage.

Or,

Or, having conſtructed part of the bridge, they raiſed a tower on the moſt advanced pier; and, under cover of the diſcharge of ſtones and darts from it, they carried on the work to the oppoſite bank. I ſhall not enlarge on the methods they took of defending a paſs, or covering a retreat with their archers, or light artillery, by placing them in the moſt advantageous poſitions; ſuch paſſages are obvious enough in the ancient authors.

I hope now, that I have proved to your ſatisfaction, that the ancients made the very ſame uſe of their machines of war, as we do of our artillery. If we find them ſeldom taken notice of in the account of field-engagements, the reaſon is, that it was the cuſtom with them to draw their ſwords, and come quickly to a cloſe conflict: and if this was the practice in our armies, the artillery would not have ſo conſiderable a ſhare, as it has at preſent, in the deciſion of a battle.

Villa, Auguſt 20, 1759.

LETTER XXXI.

On the Sieges and Naval Armaments of the Ancients, and their Reſemblance to thoſe of the Moderns.

I NEVER could ſubſcribe to the univerſal opinion, that the diſcovery of gun-powder, the compaſs, and the art of printing, have produced an entire change, and that for the better, in the ſyſtem of affairs. The compaſs indeed was a noble invention. It cannot be denied, but ſociety has derived wonderful benefits from the diſcovery of an inſtrument, which in the darkeſt atmoſphere points out to us the pole, guides us with ſecurity, and makes us in ſome meaſure maſters of the whole extent of the ocean. It may be called the very ſoul of navigation. The Cynoſure alone would never have conducted us to the diſcovery of America; and we have cauſe to boaſt, that a middling pilot in our age knows more than in the times of the ancients did Nearchus, the admiral of Alex-

Alexander the Great, or Hanno, the Columbus of the Carthaginians. The art of printing has alſo made a great alteration in the face of affairs, by rendering that common, which formerly was a luxury which the great only could partake of. But are we to conclude, that letters have received any augmentation from an art that is ſo productive of literary abortions, and by which are multiplied the means of propagating falſe ſcience, which is far worſe than ignorance itſelf? Again, does it appear, that the invention of gun-powder has introduced any univerſal changes in the military ſyſtem? Our armies march at preſent in the ſame manner, and with the ſame precautions, as thoſe of the ancients; our orders of battle are the ſame; we put in practice the ſame ſtratagems; and we encamp, or at leaſt we ſhould encamp, as they did. Nothing is changed in the fundamental principles of war. Put in the place of the *catapultæ* and the *baliſtæ* our cannon and our mortars, and all is parallel.

It gives me pleaſure to find that your idea ſo nearly coincides with mine. With regard to the field operations, which form the moſt conſiderable branch of war, you have no longer any doubts remaining. But you are not ſo clear on what relates to naval operations and ſieges, on which you deſire my opinion. I know not whether I ſhall be able to find, among my little collection of notes, wherewithal to ſatisfy you fully in this particular. To begin with ſieges: however univerſally it may be thought, that the invention of artillery has entirely changed the nature of them; yet it will be found, by thoſe who conſider the matter attentively, that the fundamental modes of the attack and defence of places are the very ſame at this day as they were in the times of the ancients. The towers, with which they flanked the curtain, jutted out juſt like our baſtions, and, according to the doctrine of Vitruvius, ſhould be at the diſtance of a bow-ſhot from each other: this correſponds with our line of defence, which is to be equal to the range of a muſket-ſhot. Perhaps we ſhall not find any great difference

ference between theſe two diſtances; for we are informed, by a paſſage in Vegetius, that the arrows carried to the diſtance of ſix hundred feet, which is about the range of a point-blank ſhot from a fire-lock. They alſo made projectures in their walls, to flank the aſſailants; and the ſtreets leading to the gates were not in a direct line, but crooked. They were not without ditches, to keep the enemy at a diſtance; nor terre-plains, nor eſplanades in the defences, to ſtop the enemy, in caſe he had got poſſeſſion of any part of the rampart: and they directed, agreeably to the precepts of the beſt modern engineers, that the works, and the places of arms, ſhould be made large and ſpacious, that there might be room for whole cohorts to draw up in them. Such was in ſubſtance their ſyſtem of defence. Their mode of attack was alſo extremely ſimilar to ours. When they pitched their camp before a town, they took care to fortify it as well from thoſe within, as from thoſe who might come from without, to ſuccour the beſieged; in which they ſhewed wonderful ingenuity. The wells, which were uſed at the ſiege of Phi-

Philipſburg, to protect the lines, and the wolf-traps that were made at the blockade of Prague, for the ſame purpoſe, were but ſlight imitations of what was contrived in the like circumſtances by the ancients. They carried on their approaches as much as poſſible under cover. Some will have it, that they were carried on by trenches, juſt as they are at preſent; others deny it: but they certainly ſecured the communication between the camp and the front of the attack with a ſpecies of trench. The beſiegers undermined the walls of the fortreſſes, and the beſieged likewiſe dug mines under the works of the beſiegers; in which ſharp conflicts often took place between the miners, who did all they could, with fumigations and fires, to deſtroy one another. The aſſault was uſually carried on under cover of a heavy diſcharge from the machines, and from the *velites*, who ſwept off with their ſtones and arrows all who ventured to ſhew themſelvs upon the walls; and ſallies were likewiſe made in the ſame manner by the beſieged, to drive the enemy from the approaches. Batteries of *baliſtæ* were

were conſtructed, with which they diſmounted the machines of the enemy, and made breaches in the walls, when at a diſtance; as they did, when cloſe, with the battering-rams: and I mentioned in my laſt, that theſe machines had force enough to diſmantle the walls, and even to level the towers, in which the principal ſtrength of the fortreſſes conſiſted. Regulus had *baliſtæ* in his army, even ſo far back as the firſt Punic war. Veſpaſian had a prodigious number at the ſiege of Jotapata; and it was with theſe machines that Pompey battered the Temple of Jeruſalem, which for ſolidity was not inferior to the ſtrongeſt citadel. No wonder then, that the learned, after conſidering the mode of attacking and defending places in paſt ages, ſhould not ſuffer themſelves to be hurried away with the current, and ſhould judge, that in this branch of the art of war, there is little difference between the ancient and the modern practice. Count Leonardi, a man eminent for his knowledge of military architecture, aſſerted, that the whole of a fortification, conſiſting in the curtain, the flank, the ditch, the covert-way,

way, the places of arms, and the batteries, no one, that underſtood any thing of modern fortifications, would hold cheap the maxims of Vitruvius. And the famous Duke of Rohan affirms, that, though the invention of artillery may have produced a few changes in military architecture, yet the principles of attack and defence are at this day the ſame with thoſe of ancient times; and that the ſiege of Alexia is the exact counterpart of the celebrated ſieges of the Prince of Orange, the Marquis of Spinola, and the Duke of Parma.

Now, if we paſs from a review of the military, to that of the naval, armaments of the ancients, we ſhall find them more conformable than is commonly imagined to thoſe of the preſent age. Their ſhips of war had the appearance of fortreſſes, as well as ours; and that not from their immenſe bulk alone, but from the nature of the arms with which they were furniſhed, which might be called great and ſmall artillery. We read in Diodorus Siculus, that Demetrius Poliorcetes had on the prows of his veſſels *catapultæ*, that carried

carried to a prodigious diſtance, which correſpond with our bow-chaſes. On the firſt-rate ſhips the ancients erected towers and caſtles: as proof of which we have the

Ibis Liburnis inter alta navium
Amice, propugnacula

of Horace; and the

Tanta mole viri turritis puppibus inſtant

of Virgil: and Florus tells us, ſpeaking of thoſe very ſhips of Mark Anthony, that they reſembled ſo many floating caſtles, that the wind could not move them without labour, and that they made the ſea groan under their weight. Theſe expreſſions might be applied with great propriety to that famous ſhip of two hundred guns, called the *Charente*, which was built by Lewis the Twelfth, or the *Anna*, of one hundred and fourteen large pieces of cannon, which I have myſelf ſeen in the port of Cronſtat, at the mouth of the Neva, in the Baltic ſea. From the machines mounted in theſe towers and caſtles they diſcharged ſtones, darts, and other miſſile weapons, as we

are informed by Vegetius; and likewiſe red-hot arrows, prepared with oil, ſulphur, and other combuſtible materials, to fire the enemy's ſhips, in the ſame manner as at ſieges. Their machines were of great ſervice in the diſembarking of troops; which was effected under cover of their diſcharge, like that of ſo many batteries of cannon. It was thus that Cæſar landed on the Britiſh ſhore. Bringing his ſhips of war cloſe to the land, he kept ſo continual and heavy a diſcharge upon the Britons, as to diſlodge them, whilſt the troops landed from the tranſports; by which means, the Romans made good their deſcent on that iſland, which coſt them afterwards ſo much labour to ſubdue.

Diodorus Siculus ſpeaks of veſſels armed, as one might call it, with artillery at the ſiege of Tyre, and at that of Rhodes, which was conducted by Demetrius Poliorcetes, the moſt memorable ſiege perhaps of all antiquity, on account of the various contrivances in engineering put in practice by that ingenious Prince.

I ſhall

I ſhall ſay nothing of the wild-fires of the Greeks, which were thrown by means of pipes or pots upon the ſhips of the enemy; an invention of the lower empire: but the fire-ſhips we ſhall find to have been a very early invention. Their hold was filled with tow, pitch and roſin; and being ſet fire to, they were carried by the wind into the midſt of the enemy's fleet. It is ſuppoſed they were originally made uſe of at Tyre to deſtroy the immenſe dyke which Alexander threw acroſs the harbour, in order to cut off that city from all communication with the ſea: but I find Thucydides takes notice of theſe fire-ſhips in his hiſtory of the Peloponneſian war, which happened long before the ſiege of Tyre. And you may find a remarkable inſtance of their effects in the Commentaries of Julius Cæſar, where he relates, that a great part of his fleet was deſtroyed by them in the Sicilian ſeas.

But notwithſtanding all theſe fires, and theſe machines, the ancients did not ſtand to engage, and, as it were, to cannonade one another at a diſtance. As in

their battles on ſhore, after the firſt diſcharge of their machines, and that iron ſhower of darts, which darken the air, as Virgil expreſſes it, they came to cloſe action, hand to hand; ſo did they likewiſe act in their naval engagements. Plutarch relates, that in the battle of Actium, the large ſhips of Mark Anthony being ſurrounded by the ſmaller and lighter Liburnian veſſels of Auguſtus, the combat had the appearance of an aſſault upon ſo many caſtles. They uſually endeavoured to ſink one another, the Greeks in particular, by boarding with the *roſtrum*, or beak, with which the ſhips prows were fortified. You remember that Duillius, the firſt naval commander of the Romans, who obtained the roſtral crown by his victory at Mylum, firſt thought of erecting on the prow of his ſhips the crow, or draw-bridge; of which Polybius has given a minute deſcription. As ſoon as they had approached near enough, they let fall the draw-bridge on the bow or ſide of the enemy's ſhip, which it grappled with a kind of iron claw, that was fixed to the extremity of it. Thus they boarded the enemy,

enemy; and the ſoldiers having filed over the draw-dridge, the ſea-fight became the ſame with an engagement on ſhore. Without this contrivance the Romans would never have ſucceeded in their firſt battle at ſea with the Carthaginians, a people ſo expert in maritime affairs; and this method of fighting they ſtill retained, after they had acquired ſome knowledge of naval operations. Their hiſtorians often ſpeak of their marine legions. Beſides, Vegetius expreſsly informs us, that the common practice was to let down the draw-bridges, board the enemy, and engage hand to hand. This was indeed, on all occaſions, the favourite method of the ancients, as that by which every blow has its effect, and which gives the fulleſt ſcope to perſonal valour. Thus, even at ſieges, the intention of all the works carried on by the aſſailants, was to bring them cloſer to the beſieged. And the Spartans, who placed their whole ſtudy in war, in which they went beyond all the other ſtates of Greece, thought their own arms the ſureſt defence, their own breaſts

breaſts the ſtrongeſt ramparts of their city.

But, to conclude at once this long harangue, might we not venture to wager, that if thoſe brave Greeks and Romans were to return into the world, they would not make any alteration, in ſpite of the cannon, in their manner of fighting? Conſidering the ſyſtem of war as a machine, we may aſſert, that the moderns have not added a ſingle wheel or pulley to what was conſtructed and provided by the ancients. All that can be ſaid is, that one ſpring of the machine has acquired a greater degree of force and activity than it had formerly. I mean the fire-arms, which carry farther than the machines of the ancients. The expanſion of air, cauſed by the burning of gun-powder, has certainly greater force to drive a ball from the barrel of a cannon, than the elaſticity of the ſlender ſtrings, which they made uſe of, had to drive a ſtone from the *baliſta*. But what eſſential difference does it make, that one arm is contrived to ſtrike at a greater diſtance? No man ever took

took it into his head to imagine, that the principles of war in modern times are changed from thoſe of the ancient, becauſe the ſight of the engineer, the admiral, and the general, has been ſo much improved, and carried ſo much farther, by the invention of the teleſcope.

Villa, Auguſt 24, 1759.

LETTER XXXII.

On the Inefficacy of Fire-arms.

THE compariſon I made between the teleſcope and the cannon, appears to you rather too bold. I allow it to be ſo. Yet, was I diſpoſed to defend it, I ſhould aſſert, that on many occaſions a commander may derive more advantage from his teleſcope than from his cannon. Do you not think it of more conſequence, to be able to diſcover at a diſtance the quality and diſpoſition of the troops, that are coming to attack you, than to throw

throw away a few ſhot upon them? But enough of this. The truth is, that our beſt generals juſt reckon as much upon the artillery, as the ancients did upon their machines. In field-operations they conſider it only as a ſupplement to the deficiency of good troops. Thus Hirtius tells us, that Julius Cæſar took a great quantity of machines with him into Africa, for no other reaſon but becauſe he had but few troops, and thoſe new levies. The Swiſs, who were the firſt reſtorers of ancient diſcipline, never avoided an action on account of the enemy's ſuperiority in artillery; and it is well known with what obſtinate valour they have engaged the moſt formidable armies, particularly French, and with what ſucceſs. Though at Marignan they were worſted, after two days ſevere combat, by Francis the Firſt, who had a ſuperior army, with at leaſt an hundred pieces of cannon; yet were they worſted with ſo much honour, that Trivulce declared, that battle was a battle of giants, and that all the engagements he had been in before, were but the play of children, in compariſon with it. Hence it was,

no

no doubt, that M. De Langeay, in ſpeaking of the fire-arms, adduces the very ſame reaſons with the Secretary, and concludes with his very words: "That, in his opinion, the artillery ſhould not prevent us from uſing the ancient modes, or emulating the valour of the ancients." There never was perhaps a greater or more terrible apparatus of cannons, mortars, and all manner of fire-arms, than in the Turkiſh camp near Belgrade. Yet this did not deter Prince Eugene from attacking the Viſir; and what the iſſue was, every body knows. In that battle they truly fought like Romans.

Even in the preſent age the ſea has beholden a few inſtances of ancient valour. Shovel, to whom England owes a great part of her maritime glory, uſed to ſay, that a naval engagement, in which men really meant to fight like men, ſhould never laſt above three hours: it was always the cuſtom with the celebrated Du Gué Trouin, who was an honour to St. Maloe's and to France, to run reſolutely on board of the enemy. It is curious to obſerve with what contempt

men of experience ſpeak of the artillery. It is of very little ſervice in an aſſault; indeed it is impoſſible to make any uſe of it there, as well as in any other manœuvre intended to break or pierce through an enemy; eſpecially when he is diſpoſed to receive you, and to give you battle in earneſt. The Condés and the Turennes, whoſe cuſtom it was to cloſe in with their opponents, and by a ſudden and vigorous attack to prevent them from making much uſe of their fire-arms, thought no more of them than Lucullus did of the archery of Tigranes. In this manner it is, that the Chevalier Folard ſpeaks of them; and Marſhal Puyſegur does not treat them any better. Monticucculi ſhews the little eſteem he had for them, when he affirms, that the lance is the queen of offenſive arms for the cavalry, as the pike is for the infantry. All theſe great men were for coming to cloſe action with the enemy, and reſting the deciſion of it on the bayonet, where every blow has its effect: whereas the far greater part of the ſhots that are fired, expend their force in the air, or upon the ground; and perhaps only three

or

or four men are killed by a whole diſcharge of muſketry. What dreadful execution, on the other hand, has been done by the bayonet, the few times that ſince its invention it has not remained unemployed during an engagement! Inſtances of it have lately been afforded by armies, which, by their diſcipline, and the admirable conduct of their commanders, raiſe the modern hiſtory to the dignity of the ancient. In theſe armies the cavalry, all intent on breaking and overthrowing their adverſaries, have already laid aſide the practice of firing. On this ſubject let me quote a couple of verſes from that excellent poem, the joint inſpiration of Mars and of Apollo:

N'employez point le feu combattant à cheval;
Son vain bruit ſe diſſipe, & ne fait point de mal.

But of the fire-arms Count Saxe ſpeaks with more ſlight than all the reſt. He relates, that Charles the Twelfth, from long experience, had formed the deſign of laying aſide the uſe of muſkets; and he is opinion, that if the war of 1740, in which he himſelf acted ſo diſtinguiſhed

a part, had laſted much longer, all parties, being perſuaded of the inutility and abuſe of fire-arms, would have agreed in reſting every thing on the *arme blanche*. It would have been curious to have ſeen in our days a prediction of Montaigne's on this ſubject accompliſhed. He thinks that the noiſe made by the fire-arms was greater, beyond all proportion, than the damage they occaſioned; and he truſts, that one day or other, men would be brought to place more confidence in a ſword, which they wield in their hand, than in a ball that eſcapes from a piſtol. But we are not to expect in our time ſo great an alteration. Perhaps it may be attributed to the obſervation of the number of defeats the Turks have ſuſtained from us, notwithſtanding it is the cuſtom of the Janniſaries to throw away their muſkets, and take to the ſabre; which is exactly conformable to the Roman practice of drawing their ſwords, as ſoon as they had diſcharged their piles. But it ſhould be conſidered that the Turks want European diſcipline, and the knowledge of evolutions; which if they added

to

to their reſolution in attacking, it would be all over with Chriſtianity. However convincing theſe arguments may be, it is not to be expected, as I before obſerved, that our armies will lay aſide the uſe of fire. It is rather to be hoped, that the authority of Count Saxe may once more introduce defenſive armour, which has not long been diſcontinued. The high opinion that is entertained of the effect of fire-arms, has co-operated with the effeminacy of modern times to aboliſh defenſive arms, people not reflecting, that a ſoldier fortified with a helmet and a breaſt-plate is tolerably ſecure from diſtant and oblique firing; and that the cuiraſs has ſaved the life of many generals; among others, that of Francis the Firſt, at the battle of Pavia. If Count Saxe's reaſoning ſhould prevail, we might ſee that part of the Secretary's plan put in execution, which relates to the defenſive armour; for you may remember, his infantry are not naked and unprovided with defence, as ours are. Such an order would give a greater degree of ſolidity to the troops, and render them leſs liable

to

to give way; would make them more ſecure from the fire, and impenetrable to the bayonet.

Villa, Auguſt 28, 1759.

LETTER XXXIII.

On the Errors of the Secretary, and the Diverſity of Opinions among Generals, and Writers on the Art of War.

I WOULD not have you imagine, that I look upon the Secretary as infallible in military matters. I am aware, that infallibility is no more the attribute of a human being, than immortality. Notwithſtanding all the comments I have made on him, I do not conſider him with the eye of a commentator. Nor does the Secretary appear to have thought himſelf incapable of error: but, as he obſerves, the errors that are committed by any one in writing, or ſpeculation, may be eaſily corrected; whereas thoſe that are committed in

in practice and execution, are diſcovered only by the ruin of empires.

His method of diſpoſing the heavy cavalry in the beginning of an action, will, no doubt, be taken up as a very groſs miſtake. As from their bulk and height they might be an excellent mark for the cannon, he would have them placed in the rear of the army, till the diſcharge of the artillery is over, and the guns taken poſſeſſion of; after which they ſhould be brought into the front. I grant, that changing the diſpoſition in this manner before an enemy, would be attended with infinite danger. That idea of his, will likewiſe be thought erroneous, that cavalry ſhould not charge, but ſuſtain the onſet, and never remove themſelves from the line of infantry; as it is the cuſtom at preſent for the cavalry to charge their opponents on a full gallop, and break into their ranks; the principal virtue of heavy cavalry being ſuppoſed to conſiſt in the ſhock and weight of their charge. To which we may anſwer, that it is improvement of a modern date that has united the expeditious movement of

cavalry

cavalry to the denſity of order and regularity of infantry; and that probably the Secretary formed his judgment from the battle of Ravenna, where the French horſe put that of the Spaniards in confuſion, only by ſuſtaining their charge. But ſhould any perſons, becauſe the Secretary has in ſome particular point laid down a maxim in oppoſition to the preſent received uſage, on that account pronounce him ignorant of the art of war, let them take care that they do not go farther than they intended. What ſhall we ſay of Monticucculi, whom all the world muſt allow to have been a maſter of his profeſſion? What ſhall we think of his judgment in giving the preference to the lance over all other offenſive arms for the cavalry, and the pike for the infantry? when it is known, that the pike has been long ſince exploded, having been ſeen for the laſt time in the Ruſſian armies, in their war with the Tartars; and that the lance is at this day uſed only by the Ulans, and ſuch other wretched troops as they are. Thoſe two conſummate generals, Cæſar and Pompey, ſhewed at Pharſalia no leſs

diverſity

diverſity in their military than in their political ſentiments. The former was of opinion, and he maintains it throughout his Commentaries, that the advantage lies in attacking your enemy with vigour; the latter, that it conſiſts in waiting and ſuſtaining his attack with firmneſs. This general is for one particular order of battle, that for another. It has been for a long time a matter of diſpute, and ſtill remains ſo, whether you ſhould place your choice troops in the center, or on the flanks. In mixing the cavalry and the infantry together, ſome will have them drawn up with the ſame front; others inſiſt that the infantry ſhould be placed before the cavalry, with different fronts, ſo as to flank them like baſtions. It is juſt the ſame in ſea affairs: ſome maintain, that you ſhould fire at the hull of the enemy's ſhips, with a view of ſinking them; others, that you ſhould point your fire to the maſts and rigging, in order to render them unmanageable. How various are the ſyſtems of fortification! And has not the new ſyſtem of the column ſet all the military writers at war with one another?

Whoever conſiders the nature of war, will not be ſurpriſed at this variety of opinion, that prevails even among the moſt claſſical military authors. The end of theſe ſpeculations is to diſcover the moſt eligible and advantageous method of fighting; and their foundation is experience, the ſole miſtreſs of truth, and the ſpring, as Dante expreſſes it, whence the ſtreams of all the arts flow. But between this and the other ſciences there is a material difference. The ſtudent of *Phyſics* can at his leiſure make obſervations on the poſition of the moon, for inſtance, and the influence it has on the tides; ſo can the metaphyſician; and they can both, when they think proper, bring their hypotheſes to the crucible of truth: whereas it ſeldom happens that military theories can be put to the teſt of experiment. Few perſons, you know, have the means of doing it; and even, when they have, you alſo know how unſatisfactory the proof is. Theſe experiments cannot be repeated ſo often, nor with ſuch calmneſs and tranquillity of mind, as is requiſite; neither can they be entirely ſtripped of thoſe incidents which

have

have power enough to alter the iſſue, and to render the concluſions that are drawn from them ſuſpected and uncertain; whence war has been called, like medicine, an *art conjectural and homicidal.*

Now, would it not appear to you the height of perverſeneſs, not to forgive the Secretary a few errors that may have eſcaped him in an art ſo intricate and difficult? The great Turenne once ſuffered a ſurpriſe, the greateſt overſight that can be committed by a commander. He uſed commonly to ſay, that general was the beſt, who had the feweſt faults; and Marſhal Saxe calls war a ſcience encompaſſed on every ſide by darkneſs. In particular, we ſhould excuſe a few erroneous principles that he may have laid down in his Fortification. That art was in his time almoſt a ſtranger in Italy, and was very far removed from the degree of perfection to which it has ſince arrived. He moreover ſpeaks of it with ſo much diffidence and caution, that it would be extremely unjuſt to judge him with that ſeverity that we ſhould a dogmatic and ſelf-opinionated writer.

Villa, September 5, 1759.

LETTER XXXIV.

On Macchiavel's System of Fortification.

IT will be an eaſy matter to give you an idea of the Secretary's fortification, and to gratify your deſire in that particular. The following he eſteems the moſt perfect method: the fortreſs to be ſurrounded by a high wall and a ditch, but without any rampart; the wall flanked by towers. Between theſe are to be the gates, which are protected by ravelins. Within the wall he has a wide and deep ditch; and with the earth dug out of it, he forms a rampart, covered by a wall not ſo lofty as the firſt. On this he places the heavy artillery, as he does the light and middle-ſized on the other; and in the ditch here and there a caſe-matte, with guns in it to fire on thoſe who may attempt a deſcent into the ditch. This is his grand fortreſs. Among the leſſer kind, where it is intended to have only one ditch, he maintains that it is better behind than before

the

the wall; by which he forms a place with a kind of covered way, if we may be allowed the expreſſion.

In many points this method will be found defective; and particularly in the flanking of the curtain with towers, in raiſing the walls too high, and higher towards the country than towards the body of the place. With regard to the firſt point, though we muſt grant it to be an error, yet it was an error he had in common with all the engineers of his age: we muſt not therefore impute it to him alone. The towers were not at that time out of vogue: probably the firſt example of flanking the curtains with baſtions, as at preſent, was given by St. Micheli, when he fortified Verona, his native place, and made Candia a fortreſs, which coſt the Turks twenty years ſiege to capture. The Secretary takes notice himſelf of the defect, which lofty walls are liable to, of being too much expoſed to the enemy's cannon; yet he thought, by making them low, they would be ſubject to an eſcalade. With regard to the third point, of making the defences loftier

loftier towards the country than towards the body of the place, contrary to the univerſal practice, I can only plead, that he is ſupported in this particular by the very reſpectable authority of the Count de Saxe, who condemns the cuſtom of conſtructing the works ſo as to command one another from the body of the place towards the couhtry, becauſe the enemy ſeeing your interior works can deſtroy them, and diſmount your guns, before they come near the rampart: he would conſequently have the profile in direct oppoſition to what it is at preſent. However this may be, the truth is, that in the Secretary's method, the heavy artillery not being able to play at the beginning of the ſiege, by being placed on the interior wall, which is much lower than the firſt, the beſieged cannot ſo eaſily deſtroy the works, and impede the approaches, of the beſiegers.

Nevertheleſs, he gives ſome excellent hints on the ſubject of ſieges. Againſt the mines of the enemy, for example, he recommends, excluſively of the counter-mines, that the ditch be made ſo deep

as

as to render it impracticable for the enemy to under-mine it, without meeting with water, the great obſtruction to mining. If the fortreſs is ſituated on a hill, that a number of deep wells be ſunk, as vent-holes to the mines which the enemy may carry on; which is pretty conformable to the modern doctrine. He likewiſe agrees with the modern practice in his re-trenchments behind the breaches, where he ſhews, that notwithſtanding the open-ing made in the rampart, the entrance may be rendered extremely difficult to the enemy; and in preferring dry to wet ditches. According to the precepts of the beſt modern engineers, he pre-ſcribes, that in general the works be made large, that they may be more eaſily retrenched, and that they may reſiſt the longer the force of the cannon.

So much for the Secretary's ſyſtem of fortification. I ſhall only add, that he often makes uſe of this expreſſion, *Save the judgment of thoſe who are better in-formed*; which ſhews the caution with which he thought a man ſhould ſpeak of things out of his profeſſion. Thus he declines

declines treating at all of maritime affairs, declaring his ignorance on that ſubject, which, he ſays, ſhall be left to the Genoeſe and the Venetians, who, he adds, have placed their principal ſtudy, and have diſtinguiſhed themſelves greatly, in that branch. And in fact the Italians might once have ranked themſelves among the maritime powers. The ocean did not then own the ſovereignty of the Engliſh flag; and one may ſay, with Monteſquieu, that at that time Holland was not yet created.

Villa, September 8, 1759.

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LETTER XXXV.

On ſome particular Precepts of Macchiavel. Whether a large Number of Officers be uſeful in an Army?

YOU remember, I dare ſay, the critic of Boccalini, who having preſented to Apollo a liſt of trifling faults, which he had induſtriouſly traced out of a very excellent work, the God made him threſh a ſack of corn, and in recompence preſented him with the chaff. Thus it ſhould happen to the criticiſers of Macchiavel: for one blunder that he has committed, he has made amends by a number of uſeful truths; and if the ſcience of war is, as was before obſerved, to be compared with medicine, we muſt acknowledge, that he has enriched it with a good quantity of aphoriſms. I do not mean general maxims, as on the neceſſity of diſcipline; the confidence that a good general ſhould endeavour to inſpire his troops with; when he ſhould give battle to his enemy; and others of

that nature, which are evident to every one of common ſenſe, and are found nearly the ſame in moſt military treatiſes. I ſpeak of thoſe particular precepts, relating to the detail of the art, in which he agrees with the moſt able and experienced commanders.

I think I have given you a few inſtances in ſome of my former letters. Open the book, and you will find a variety of others. On the ſubject, for inſtance, of placing the cavalry before the infantry, he ſays, you muſt either place them at ſuch a diſtance as, being repulſed, they may have room to get clear of the infantry, without driving upon them, or elſe leave intervals large enough for the broken cavalry to retire through. Let not this precaution be imagined, continues he, of little importance; by not attending to it, ſeveral armies have been put to the rout, and defeated by their own people. He ſays expreſsly in another place, that the troops ſhould not be too much extended, in order to cover as much ground as poſſible; for that this will weaken the line of battle:

in

in which he agrees with the beſt commanders, and particularly with Monticucculi, who preſcribed a very different mode from what is now practiſed. The files are drawn up only three deep, in order to extend the front, as if for a review, rather than for an engagement.

I remember having read of the diſcuſſion of that queſtion in France, Whether a great number of officers is uſeful in an army, or not? It was decided in the affirmative; and this deciſion, which has been the cauſe of ſo many victories to France, may be found in the Art of War. He obſerves, that perſons not acquainted with the art, may poſſibly imagine, that the number of officers, which he ſuppoſes in the legion, might create confuſion; but he affirms, that conſidering them all in ſubordination to one another, and referring ultimately to one head, they maintain order, and that it is impoſſible for it to ſubſiſt without them. A wall, that is giving way on every ſide, requires a number of props, though ſlight, rather than a few, however ſtrong; the force of any one not being ſufficient

to prevent the ruin at a diſtance. Thus in an army, ſays the Secretary, there ſhould be, amongſt every ſmall body of men, one of more life and ſpirit, or at leaſt of more authority, than the reſt, who, with his orders, exhortation and example, may keep the others reſolute and attentive to their duty.

I cannot determine, whether a profeſſor of the art, or one who only makes it his ſtudy, deſerves the moſt praiſe for clearing up and explaining theſe matters. A profeſſional man, who ſees what is defective, and learns how to ſupply it, is guided only by practice, together with a ſound judgment: but a man, not of the profeſſion, who has found the means of improving it, muſt have penetrated into its very nature and eſſence. To the one, however ſenſibly he may reaſon on it, war can only be trade; to the other it muſt neceſſarily be a ſcience.

Villa, September 12, 1759.

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LETTER XXXVI.

Concluſion in praiſe of Macchiavel, and of Florence.

I AM very much pleaſed with your intention of reading the book which has furniſhed us with ſo much matter for diſcuſſion. You will do better to go to the fountain-head at once, than to drink at the rivulets which I have drawn from it. You will find that the art of war, as well as the fine arts, derived its ſecond birth from Tuſcany; and I think we might excuſe the Florentines a little vanity on this account. You know what Averani uſed to ſay, that, through the means of Galileo and Veſpucci, one could neither raiſe one's eyes to the heavens, nor lower them down to the ground, without being put in mind of the glory of Florence. It will reſound in proſe and in verſe, as long as Petrarch, Dante, Boccace, and Berni, ſhall find readers in the world. To what perfection has not Michel Angelo brought

thoſe

thoſe arts that regard the objects of ſight? And who will not acknowledge the Secretary to be a claſſical author, as well in affairs of war, as in thoſe of politics? We are by this time fully convinced, that his not having worn a ſword, ſhould be no objection to his authority as a military writer. Though Vegetius never commanded an army, yet Monticucculi thought him worthy to be placed in the ſame claſs with the greateſt generals of antiquity. "No one," ſays this great man, "ſhould hazard a battle without veteran or diſciplined troops, And who would be mad enough to do it? Not Scipio, nor Sempronius, nor Vegetius." * And did not Newton, though he was not accuſtomed to paſs his nights in gazing at the planets, though he was not a profeſſed aſtronomer, teach the aſtronomers themſelves how to make their computations, and to keep their ephemerides? Happy would it have been for Italy, if the Italian Princes in the golden age of Leo, leſs given to politeneſs and letters, had, turning their thoughts to military ſtudies, raiſed, appointed,

* Memoirs, book iii. chap. 1.

pointed, and diſciplined armies, according to the precepts of the Florentine Secretary.

The valour of the ancients reviving with the ancient inſtitutions, they would not have experienced ſo much miſery from the invaſions of the neighbouring powers beyond the mountains; and, as Fabricius Colonna gallantly expreſſes it, they would either have augmented their ſtates with glory, or would have loſt them without diſhonour.

But it is time, after ſo long a campaign, that we ſhould prepare to quit the field, and to render, with the approaching vintage, our winter quarters ſociable and pleaſant.

Villa, September 18, 1759.

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